

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE
FACTORS THAT HELP OR HINDER
TEACHER LEADERSHIP: CASE
STUDIES OF THREE URBAN
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE
PIETERMARITZBURG REGION**

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**An investigation into the factors that help or
hinder Teacher Leadership:
Case studies of three urban primary schools
in the Pietermaritzburg region.**

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F.D.E. ; B.Ed.(Hons)

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the academic
requirement for the degree of
Master of Education: Education Management
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Pietermaritzburg

January
2007

This dissertation is dedicated to
my parents Parvathee and Sadasiva Venketesser Chetty.
For their love and support.

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ABSTRACT

This study was done in order to determine whether teachers are taking on leadership roles in their schools. The following questions were posed: What factors exist in schools that help or hinder teacher leadership? What structures need to be in place for teachers to be leaders? How does the culture of the school support or creates barriers to teacher leadership? And, finally, what personal factors enhance or inhibit teacher leadership?

This dissertation takes the form of case studies of three urban primary schools in the Pietermaritzburg region. The study is qualitative in nature and examines the leadership roles that teachers are undertaking, with the intention of identifying and exploring the factors that help or hinder teacher leadership. To ascertain the responses of teachers, a questionnaire, as well as semi-structured interviews were used. The principals who participated in the study were also interviewed to ascertain their views on teacher leadership.

South Africa is a relatively new democracy with a host of new policies. The one that is of relevance to this study is the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000). This policy prescribes that teachers are required to undertake seven roles. Of these seven roles, the one that is of particular relevance to this study, is the role of leader, administrator and manager. This role, as prescribed by policy, implies that teachers are expected to undertake leadership roles, both in and out of the classroom. What is of interest, however, is whether and to what extent, this policy prescription is implemented in the school.

The findings revealed that schools in the study were characterized by structures that were 'top-down', and that leadership roles in these schools were delegated, rather than distributed. Findings also pointed to a number of barriers to teachers taking on

leadership roles. These included time constraints, rigid attitudes of principals and school management team members as well as the impact of taking on additional roles and responsibilities, on the personal lives of teachers.

Some recommendations in order for leadership to succeed in South Africa would be, firstly, that steps should be taken to implement and encourage teacher leadership. This would entail a change in mindset on the part of principals in particular, many of whom would have to radically revise their views of what constitutes leadership and who should lead. Secondly, there should be a movement away from delegated leadership towards a more distributed form of leadership. Thirdly, it is also the recommendation of this study that the creation of a collaborative culture in schools will create an enabling environment for teacher leadership to flourish.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis has been researched and undertaken by myself and unless specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own work.


Shavitha Mathuri Rajagopaul
January 2007

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the contribution of the following people, without whose help, assistance and support, I would not be able to complete this study:

- Ms Callie Grant, my supervisor, for her assistance and meticulous editing and valuable advice. I could not have done this without her help.**
- I am deeply appreciative of the assistance and courtesy extended to me by the three principals of the schools in the study, the educators who participated in the interviews and the educators who answered my questionnaire. Without your willingness and support, this study would not have been possible.**
- To Ravi Rajagopaul, a special thank you for editing.**
- Gary Ramlal, my colleague and friend, who supported me throughout this study.**
- To my principal, for his support and giving me time off to conduct my interviews, a special thank you.**
- To my two gorgeous sons, Sayurn and Ushaylin, for being so patient and understanding, a very big thank you**
- And last but not least, to my husband Ravi, for being there. For his support, encouragement and love, a very special thank you. Without your support, this study would not have been possible.**

ABBREVIATIONS USED

SMT - School Management Team
PAM - Personnel Administrative Measure

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH TOPIC

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic and the research problem underlying this study. It outlines the background to the study, the research rationale, and sketches what follows in subsequent chapters.

1.2 Background to the study

South Africa has emerged from its Apartheid past to become a transforming democracy. In a transforming democracy like South Africa, policies are continually being revised and changed. McLennan and Thurlow write that “new national and provincial policy framework and legislation make it clear that governance and management need to be reconceptualised at all levels of the education system, and especially at the level of the school” (2003: 2). In order to do this, one needs to look at the way in which schools are managed. One of the challenges, according to McLennan and Thurlow (2003), is to develop appropriate capacity in the systems, structures, ethos and management of the educational system to ensure that the principles defined in policy are achieved. They assert that in order for democratic governance to be established, there has to be a strong and clear national policy framework, which will give a definition of functions and powers, areas of authority and spaces for participation.

In line with this, the report of the Task Team on Education Management Development (1996) argues, that the key challenge to education management relates to the inappropriate nature of many of the existing management structures.

The report argues that

new education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery (1996: 25).

McLennan and Thurlow (2003) suggest that the current thinking about management in South Africa falls within three broad paradigms. These paradigms do not follow consecutively, nor do they exclude each other; and it is possible for them to co-exist in one organizational structure. A summary of these paradigms are as follows.

The first paradigm, the scientific education management paradigm is of relevance when dealing with the management of schools during the Apartheid era. During this period there was a desire for order and effective delivery in the short term. In this paradigm, management is outlined by van der Westhuizen and his colleagues (1991) as involving planning, organizing, guiding and controlling. They argue that the school manager is firstly, a professional, and that the education manager has two roles: those of professional leader and administrative manager. It would seem that in this paradigm, the principal's position of power and authority can be maintained if order in the school can be maintained.

The second paradigm is education management, which sees the shift in focus to "business-orientated practices" (McLennan & Thurlow 2003: 10). This is the consequence of the introduction of Model C schools in 1992 to cope with the envisaged financial cut backs in the white education budget. The cutbacks in white education expenditure, was seen as an attempt to rationalize and equalize the resources between the different education departments. In this paradigm, the principal is seen as playing a critical role in facilitating motivation and performance of staff. The focus, here, is on school leadership rather than management activities. There is a total shift to leadership, organizational development and total quality management and assurance.

The third paradigm, education governance and management, is characterized by concepts of governance and managing change, with an emphasis on issues related to change management, relationship building, strategic alignment and continuous leading. This paradigm approach suggests a need for collaboration and participation.

According to McLennan and Thurlow (2003), if there is to be change in school management in South Africa, there is, then, a need to encapsulate aspects from all three paradigms: Firstly, there is a need to develop structures in terms of planning and organizing; secondly, to develop leadership skills and democratic leadership; and thirdly, to facilitate collaboration and participation of all stakeholders in the school.

The transformation in education, post 1994, has resulted in many principals being unprepared for the changing roles. The principals play an important role in the management of their schools. The Task Team report on Education Management Development states that:

principals and teachers have consistently been at the receiving end of top-down management structures. They have worked in a regulated environment and have become accustomed to receiving direct instructions from department officials (1996: 19).

The report further states that new education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways, to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery. The report states that the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996, places us firmly on the road to a school based system of education management, and that “schools will increasingly come to manage themselves” (Ibid: 28). Schools that will be able to make this change will depend largely on the nature and quality on their internal management. The Task Team on

Education Management Development proposes an approach to education management that is:

integrative and a collaborative one: collaborative, in that it involves all staff and stakeholders, and integrative, in so far as it informs all management processes and outcomes in an organized setting (1996: 30).

As Thurlow argues, “South African schools, through new policy and legislature, have been placed on the road to a school-based system of education management and, in this respect, the new direction is paralleled by similar trends in several other countries” (2003: 38). An important consideration that must be taken into account, as proposed by Harley et. al., is that, “education under apartheid encouraged teacher conservatism and compliance, new curriculum legislation increases teacher autonomy and professional discretion” (2000: 288).

While many education policies, such as the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000), say that teachers should be taking on leadership roles, little research has been done to ascertain whether South African teachers have taken on leadership roles. The Policy document, *Norms and Standards for Educators*, lists the seven roles and competences for educators and one of these roles is that of “leader administrator and manager”(2000: A50). If policy prescribes that educators must be leaders, are educators aware of this policy prescription, and are they given the opportunities by principals in their schools, to undertake leadership roles? This is line with what Fleisch and Christie (2004) have to say about principals. They suggest that principals should be “able to work together with staff and student leadership to support the central goals of learning and teaching in schools. It goes without saying that, for principals to be able to do this, they need to have legitimacy and authority” (2004: 102). This statement brings to the fore the important question of whether principals do have this authority to implement change and whether they are able to implement the new policy. Jansen examines the “evidence for

understanding the policy-practice gap through the lens of political symbolism” (2002: 200). He suggests South Africa is overly fascinated with new policy statements, but is less interested in their implementation. He is of the opinion that, “dramatic policy announcements and sophisticated policy documents continue to make no, or little reference to the modalities of implementation” (2002: 202). Harley et. al. (2000), suggest that if teachers are not supported in implementing policy that governs their roles, then the consequences will be more severe than just surface change, and instead of seeing these policies as an opportunity for personal development, teachers will most likely experience them as intimidating paperwork. If this is the case, then, it would explain why there is no evidence of workshops or courses that encourage educators to take on leadership roles, as required in the Norms and Standards for Educators policy document (2000). Harley et. al. believe that for real change to take place, in South Africa,

what teachers need is not impersonal policy directives implemented from above with the overtones of authority and control, but localized, contextualized, even personalized, developmental support and assistance in the everyday business of teaching (2000: 300).

Jansen argues, that in every single White Paper in education, the lead-in paragraph states, “that education is required to deal with the realities of globalization, international technologies and expanding economic markets. The new citizen, therefore, is a global citizen and the role of education is to induct learners into a world of expanding horizons” (2002: 205). If South Africa wants to keep up with globalization, then it makes sense to look at the benefits of teacher leadership in other countries and question whether these benefits are likely to be transferred to the South African context.

A reading of Muijs and Harris (2003) does suggest that while teacher leadership is what some South African teachers are already doing, to some extent, it is not

necessarily labeled or perceived as teacher leadership, but forms part of the level one educators' job description. According to the Norms and Standards for Educators document, the level one educator is required to take on leadership roles in respect of subject/learning areas, contribute to professional development of colleagues by sharing knowledge, co-operate with colleagues and foster administrative efficiency within the school (2000: A47). The purpose of this document is to specify the requirements of the National Department of Education, as employer, of all educators in public institutions. In this document, seven roles of the educator are outlined together with a description of the three competences as well as the 120 sub-competences. According to Harley et. al. (2000: 292), "an educator in possession of all three kinds of competences (foundational, practical and reflexive) is self-directed, well informed and a highly skilled professional with a strong sense of ethics and accountability, who is constantly reflecting on and developing her practice". Hoyle (1980) cited in Harley et. al. (2000: 292), provides two typologies of professionalism: 'restricted' and 'extended'. Restricted professionalism refers to teachers whose thinking and practices are classroom based, rooted in experience rather than in theory, and who are strictly focused on the academic programme. Extended professionalism refers to educators who see their work in a broader educational context, and who are continually evaluating their work because they see teaching as constantly improving and developing. As Harley et. al. (2000: 292) maintain, "the roles and competences outlined by current South African policy clearly encourages a shift from the restricted professionalism required by the past education system towards the extended professionalism required by the current curriculum policy".

If the level one educator is required, then, to do these tasks listed in the Norms and Standards for Educators (2000), I asked myself, why is this not labeled as leadership? From this question, the following questions emerged. Firstly, is this leadership role of teachers recognized and understood by principals and by teachers themselves? Secondly, is the implementation of teacher leadership happening and, if so, and are schools supporting teacher leaders?

1.3 Research rationale

I am a teacher in a school and I have taken on a number of leadership roles but a number of colleagues at other schools find that they cannot do this due to factors that militate against their taking on these roles, factors such as hierarchical structures, time constraints, and generally apathy amongst members of staff. After reading Muijs and Harris (2003), I felt that a study of the factors that help or hinder teachers taking on leadership roles, would provide some insight into why teachers either take, on or shy away from, these leadership roles.

I feel that in order for teacher participation in leadership to forge ahead and move beyond mere tokenism, communication needs to exist between and among staff. For me authentic communication is essential in order for teachers to contribute to decision-making, and that the collegiality that develops will lead to new professional norms and standards.

While the concept of teacher leadership is fairly new in South Africa and little research has been done on it, this is not so in other countries. Muijs and Harris state that:

as the limitations of individual leadership have become increasingly evident through recent research in the United Kingdom, the idea of collective or teacher leadership has been well established in other countries. In particular, over the past decade the United States of America and Canada have challenged the notion of singular leadership practiced by the principal (2003: 437).

Studies in these countries have explored both formal and informal leadership. Leithwood et. al. (1998) investigated both formal and informal roles of teacher leadership. They suggest that formal roles involve representing the school at district

level decision-making, stimulating professional growth of colleagues, being an advocate for teachers, and inducting new teachers into the school. On the other hand, informal roles relate to sharing their expertise, volunteering for new projects, helping colleagues carry out duties and assisting in the improvement of classroom practices.

However, teacher leadership is not without its problems. There are a number of barriers to teacher leadership. Harris (2004:19) says that “there are structural, cultural and micro-political barriers operating in schools that make distributed forms of leadership difficult to implement”. The questions that may be asked are how does one distribute responsibility and who distributes leadership? This, then, becomes the challenge facing many schools. Top down approaches also impede the development of distributed leadership (Muijs and Harris 2003). This led me to question the type of leadership that exists in our South African schools, and I wondered, to what extent South African teachers were being given the opportunities to take on meaningful leadership roles. Furthermore, if these leadership roles were available to teachers, what factors have helped them to or hindered them from taking on leadership roles. Finally, I was interested to know to what extent did the structure and culture in schools help teachers take on leadership roles?

1.4 Key issues to be addressed in the study

1.4.1 Research aim

The aim of this study is to explore the concept and practice of teacher leadership in the South African context, and to contribute to filling the gap that exists in the literature, by offering research on teacher leadership in the South African context.

1.4.2 Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What factors exist in schools that help or hinder teacher leadership?
 - 1.1. What structures need to be in place for teachers to be leaders?
 - 1.2. How does the culture of the school support or create barriers to teacher leadership?
2. What personal factors enhance or inhibit teacher leadership?

1.5 Outline of the thesis

In the next chapter, I outline and discuss my literature review and theoretical framework. Chapter Three focuses on the research design and the methodology used in the study. Chapter four includes a presentation, discussion and analysis of the results obtained in the study. The focus of chapter five is the conclusions that have emerged from my study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter consists of a review of some of the literature on teacher leadership. This review includes the different definitions of teacher leadership, the different types of teacher leadership that exists and a discussion on the need for teacher leadership. Distributed leadership and the conditions necessary for teacher leadership are discussed. The barriers to teachers taking on these roles, and the role that principals play in teachers taking on leadership roles, are also discussed. The focus then moves to the importance of a collaborative culture in a school and organizational structure as essential aspects of teacher leadership. This chapter concludes with a look at what South African policies have to say about teacher leadership.

2.2. Definitions of teacher leadership

The notion of teacher leadership is a relatively new concept in many countries and especially in developing countries like South Africa. In order to clearly define this concept for the South African context, a number of definitions are examined.

According to Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001: 5), “teachers who are leaders, lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved educational practice”. For Crowther et. al., “teacher leadership facilitates principled action to achieve whole-school success. It implies the distinctive power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth and adults. And it contributes to long term, enhanced quality of community life” (2002: 10). Teacher leadership, for Harris, is “premised upon the ability to empower others to lead. It is a shared commodity owned by those

who work within the school and those who work on behalf of the school” (2005: 80 – 81).

In the South African context, Grant (2005: 44) is of the opinion that:

teacher leadership implies a form of leadership beyond headship or formal position. It refers to teachers becoming aware of and taking up informal leadership roles both in the classroom and beyond. It includes teachers working collaboratively with all stakeholders towards a shared vision of their school within a culture of mutual respect and trust.

I concur with Grant’s definition because, in South Africa, teachers do lead in the classroom and beyond, and this is in line with policy, which states that teachers should be leaders, administrators and managers (Norms and Standards for Educators 2000). If it does empower others to lead, as Harris says, then I suggest that it will “influence others towards improved educational practices” (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001: 5).

2.3. The different types of teacher leadership roles

Teacher leadership in schools can be either formal or informal. According to Leithwood et. al.,

head teacher, master teacher, department head, union representative, member of the school governance council and mentor are associated with formal roles. And that teachers exercise informal leadership in their schools by sharing their expertise, volunteering for new projects and bringing new ideas to the school as well as helping colleagues carry out classroom duties, engagement of their colleagues in

experimentation and the examination of more powerful instructional techniques (1999: 116- 117).

In the South African context, formal leadership roles will include being a representative on the School Governing Body, a Union Representative, a representative on the Staff Development Team, being a staff representative on the School Management Team and chairing learning area committees.

In the American context, teachers also lead in the classroom and beyond the classroom.

Teachers assume leadership roles in the classroom, such as facilitator, coach, provider of feedback and counselor. Beyond the classroom, teacher leaders serve as mentors, peer coaches, teacher trainers, curriculum specialists, or simply as willing listeners. They can serve as observers and coaches of other teachers' teaching practice, exchanging materials with other teachers and serving as mentors to others (Katzenmeyer & Moller 2001 : 12).

Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) also agree that there should be a focus on teacher development in curriculum leadership roles, mentoring, collaboration and decision-making which would "all provide testimony to the ways in which schools and educational systems are seeking to involve teachers more in the life and work of the school outside the classroom" (1992: 7). I also concur that there should be a focus on leadership roles. This can be done by motivating teachers to take on these roles in the hope that they will perceive the benefits of working together, collaborating and finding solutions together, which could lead to a better working environment.

2.4. Why Teacher Leadership?

Why is there a need for teacher leadership and what are the benefits to the teacher, the school, and the community? This can be answered by quoting Boyd-Dimock and McGree:

advocacy for teacher professionalism and expanded leadership roles is based on the understanding that teachers, because they have daily contact with learners, are in the best position to make critical decisions about curriculum and instruction. Moreover, they are better able to implement changes in a comprehensive and continuous manner (1995: 1).

I agree that having teacher leaders on the staff can lead to advantages for the school and the learners themselves. The presence of teacher leaders implies that such teachers have bought into the vision of the school and are on their way to taking ownership of the school. If leadership is about taking an institution forward, it would logically follow, that an institution can be taken forward more effectively and meaningfully if more teachers take collective ownership of the institution. Some other advantages of having teacher leaders can be found in research done by Steyn and Squelch (1997). Their respondents said that teacher leaders would benefit their school and pupils, they would be happy in their work and be more organized and that teachers would work harder and be more professional. There is further evidence of this in a set of dialogues reported by Borich (1995). In one of the dialogues one of the teachers had this to say about leaders: “the teachers who have a purpose and conviction never chose it with the expectation that recognition or reward would be forthcoming. They chose it for themselves to see, and to enjoy” (1995: 101). Another teacher in the same dialogue had the following to say: “leaders- those who are most influential in the lives of others around them – have confidence – a belief

in themselves. They're able to see themselves apart from the good/bad, right/wrong, value judgements that others so often place on themselves" (Ibid : 102).

The principals in Steyn and Squelch's research also noted that "by empowering teachers, they would become far more accountable for what they do and thus, more professional" (1997: 4), and, that teachers "will be far more contented if they have more say in matters that affect them and will feel part of the school team and not mere workers in a beehive" (Ibid: 4). When teachers are contented they feel part of the school and they want to do more for the school. They feel part of the school community and have better relationships with other members of the staff. According to Donaldson,

teacher leaders, by virtue of their membership in the teacherhood, can have vast informal influence within a faculty, staff and community. As 'one of us', their opinions, proposals and practices can carry unusual power with colleagues. Their capacity to facilitate problem-solving in the immediate instructional worlds of their peers, permits teacher leaders to influence directly the teacher groups collective efficacy (2001: 102-103).

I agree with Donaldson because, in a school, teachers have enormous influence over one another and if this is encouraged, then teachers would be more likely to benefit from positive and constructive input from other members of staff.

When teachers lead, "they discover the potential to influence student learning through their own actions" (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001: 32). Motivations for teacher leadership summed up by Conley (1993), cited in Leithwood, are "enhancing teacher's sense of professionalism, stimulating organizational efficiency and revitalizing teachers through increased interaction with their colleagues" (1999: 115). This 'interaction with their colleagues,' leads to greater efficacy between

staff members and greater collegiality between them. Fullan and Hargreaves go on to state that “leadership that neither understands nor involves the teacher is therefore likely to be leadership that fails” (1992: 23). It would seem then that in order for teacher leadership to be successful in a school, interaction of colleagues is very important and must be encouraged, if it is going to lead to teachers working collectively together.

Leithwood et. al. (2003), suggest a range of ideas that administrative leaders can implement to develop teacher leadership in their schools. Firstly, they suggest clear role definition. They are of the opinion that the roles that are undertaken, should be clearly defined. I agree with this because, although leadership roles exist in schools, teachers do not fully understand what is expected of them in these roles. There must be guidelines for the teacher leadership roles but they must not be so clearly defined that they constrict the teacher in the role. The teacher must be allowed the space to develop in the role and bring his/her personal traits to the role. Teachers must be given the freedom to develop the role as they see fit. Leithwood et. al. (2003), further suggest that the school should gain a realistic perspective on time. They argue that it is “important to help teacher leaders learn how to manage their time outside the classroom, including limiting the number of leadership initiatives in which they become involved” (p197). I concur with this because if teachers take on too many roles, then contact time with their learners would be hampered as these roles may take teachers away from the classroom. Personal time may also be affected by teachers spending too much time at meetings, and planning for the roles that they are involved in. Therefore it is advisable for teachers to limit the number of roles that they are involved in. Finally, according to Leithwood et. al. (2003), training opportunities should be created out of leadership tasks where teachers are supported in leadership assignments. I believe that in order for teachers to take on leadership roles, there must be some sort of training given. Teachers must be invited to attend leadership workshops and this should be followed with mentoring and support in the school context. One of the pre-requisites for teacher leadership should logically be capacity building and empowerment.

2.5. Distributed leadership

In order for schools to become more collaborative, there must be some way in which leadership can be strengthened. Grant citing Gronn (2000: 325) suggests that “a form of distributed leadership is needed where principals are willing to relinquish their power to others and where fixed leader-follower dualisms are abandoned ‘in favour of the possibility of multiple, emergent, task-focused roles’ (2006: 513)”.

The question that then can be asked is, what is distributed leadership and how can this be introduced in South Africa, since South African schools operate under challenging circumstances? Harris argues that “distributed leadership is the multiple source of guidance and direction, following the contours of expertise in an organization, made coherent through a common culture” (2004: 15). According to Leithwood, a collaborative culture “encourages the exchange of ideas and endorses mutual problem solving, thereby, providing rich opportunities for the exercise of teacher leadership and suitable motivation for future teachers to develop capacity” (1998: 132). According to Muijs and Harris (2003: 445), “a teachers’ ability to lead, has an influence on the quality of relationships and teaching, it builds self esteem and positive relationships within the school”.

Muijs and Harris suggest a distributed leadership theory that “advocates that schools ‘decentre’ the leader” (2003: 439), implying that leadership need not only rest with the principal but that anyone can assume a leadership role. Gibbs (1954), cited in Gronn, claims that “leadership is probably best conceived as a group quality” (2000: 324). Distributed leadership theory according to Muijs and Harris, is helpful in clarifying teacher leadership for three reasons:

Firstly, it incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals in a school who work at guiding and mobilizing staff in the instructional change process. Secondly, it implies

a social distribution of leadership where the leadership function is stretched over the work of individuals, and where the leadership task is accomplished through the interaction of multiple leaders. Thirdly, it implies interdependency rather than dependency, embracing how leaders of various kinds and in various roles share responsibilities (2003: 440).

Grant suggests that “in keeping with the notion of distributed leadership, teachers need to be encouraged to find their voices, take up their potential as leaders and change agents to produce a liberating culture in their schools” (2006: 513). Grant further suggests that “teachers need to shift from a follower role to one of operating as teacher leaders, whether they are informal leaders or in a formal leadership role such as that of head of department or learning area coordinator” (ibid: 513).

Another important factor that must be taken into account in understanding distributed leadership and teacher leadership in the South African context as stressed by Dadey and Harber (1991) cited in Thurlow (2003: 90) is that “values and beliefs in Africa are likely to differ markedly from those prevalent in the West and need to be taken into account in devising management strategies”.

Meanwhile Harris (2004), looks at a study done in Britain by the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) which explored successful leadership in schools facing challenging circumstances. She found that Heads used a number of strategies for distributing leadership. These included involving others in decision-making, allocating important tasks to teachers and rotating leadership responsibilities within the school. They also encouraged and supported teacher-led initiatives and developments.

2.6. Conditions necessary for teacher leadership

A number of conditions are necessary to support and sustain teachers in leadership positions. Lieberman (1992), cited in Boyd-Dimock & McGee (1995: 7), identifies a number of conditions that are essential to the success of new teacher roles and responsibilities. For Lieberman, it is important that teacher leadership roles be part of an overall **vision** and set of values that accepts and expects teachers to participate in leadership. The **structure** of the schools needs to accommodate this. Although the structure varies according to the school and community context, it must bring legitimacy to the new role and facilitate the understanding that knowledgeable and well-respected teachers can provide leadership. Within this framework, **time** is needed to experiment, reflect and create. Teachers need to talk to other teachers, develop materials, deal with conflicts and build collegial relationships. Finally Lieberman argues that **skills** and abilities are required, which can be labeled and learned, that make leadership more effective: promoting a clear vision, taking initiative, persevering in the face of obstacles, analyzing and making programme adjustments/ improvements and building support with parents and community. Furthermore there is a need to build a team spirit among faculty, provide support and encouragement for other teachers, facilitate communication and reflection among the faculty, celebrate and recognize programme successes, use alternative strategies to build skills and exercise patience.

2.7. Barriers to Teacher Leadership

Teacher leadership is not without its problems and it would seem from the literature that there are a number of barriers to teacher leadership. These barriers hinder teachers in leadership positions from doing their jobs successfully. Some of these barriers, according to Donaldson (2001), are the dismissal, by colleagues, of their efforts to build connections, teachers ignoring attempts to organize them and to cultivate collective action, and the 'norm of autonomy' that allows interpersonal conflicts to rule staff culture. He further states that teacher leadership dependence is a problem in schools with divided faculties.

It is also a challenge to senior or mid-career teachers whose commitment has gone stale. Teacher leaders have been frustrated by colleagues who have 'seen it all before' (Donaldson: 2001) and who are unwilling or unable to mobilize themselves. A further barrier, according to Donaldson, is the effort to 'lead from within', which can encourage clannishness and provoke competition for power and resources, and can be dismissed or openly resisted by colleagues, often with great consequence to staff commitment and collective purpose.

Leithwood et. al. argue that the exercise of teacher leadership is inhibited by a number of conditions:

- Time taken for work outside the classroom probably interferes with time needed for students.
- When extra time is provided, it is usually not enough.
- Lack of time, training and funding for leadership roles.
- Interference in teachers personal lives as well as their classroom work
- Isolation
- Lack of role definition
- Taking on responsibilities outside their areas of expertise (1999: 117).

'Lack of time is a major barrier to teacher leadership (Leithwood 1999, Harris 2004 and Grant 2006). The research done by Steyn and Squelch concurs with this view: "the time factor was identified as a major obstacle to teacher empowerment: being actively involved in decision-making processes is perceived as very time consuming, especially when it involves additional meetings" (1997: 4). Principals can help by ensuring that the important resource of time is available. "Principals must expand and redesign the use of time. Revising the teachers schedule is usually necessary if teachers are to have time to interact professionally" (Goldring and Rallis 1993: 49). Fullan and Hargreaves concur with this idea and they suggest that principals can "also help release teacher time for other activities by covering teachers' classes occasionally. By doing this, they also show their commitment to

the activity for which the teachers are being released” (1992: 47). Another barrier to teacher leadership is public opinion and the public’s expectation about teachers’ use of time (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001). If time in the day is being taken for planning of leadership activities, then parents must be informed of the changes to the times of the day or changes in the timetable.

Zinn (1997), cited in Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001: 67), found that a further impeding factor to teacher leadership was personal consideration and commitment. This might include family and other responsibilities that compete with leadership roles. Some of these responsibilities could be child rearing, single parenthood, ageing and infirm parents, illness and a crisis in the family. They also found that personal health issues or concerns, lack of family support for leadership efforts and cultural or religious values may discourage leadership.

According to Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001), principals are the biggest barriers to teacher leadership especially those principals who do not want to share leadership roles among members of staff. Research has shown that principals need to recognize leadership qualities in their teachers and encourage these teachers to make use of their leadership qualities for the good of the school.

Lieberman and Miller also note that researchers who were able to develop understandings as to why teachers found assuming leadership roles difficult, asserted that “leadership responsibilities were considered as add-on to an already heavy teacher workload, and that teachers assumed leadership as part of their work, not an addition to it” (2004: 22). I agree with Liebermann and Miller, that teachers do have a heavy workload, especially in the South African context, where the teacher is expected to be a leader in the classroom as well as beyond. Teachers spend additional time after school involved in sport and in extra-curricular activities and are then expected to chair committees and volunteer to lead committees and/or projects. In the South African context, this is not perceived or acknowledged as teacher leadership and constitutes ‘part of the job’.

Another barrier to teacher leadership, according to Grant, is teachers who are resistant to change. This can only change if teachers “become intrinsically motivated and see both the personal and professional benefits of taking up the role of teacher leadership” (Grant, 2006: 527).

Steyn and Squelch in their research, also found that “teachers are not interested in participating in management issues and simply like to do their work and leave immediately after school” (1997: 4). I concur with this statement by Steyn and Squelch as there are many teachers who are not interested in taking up leadership roles as they feel that these roles take up too much personal time and that they would rather leave as soon as school is over for the day. Steyn and Squelch’s research also shows that “principals and superintendents, might feel threatened by teachers becoming empowered. They might feel, that their own powers will be diminished” (1997: 4). According to Lumby, because principals have become used to top-down management structures, “it is tempting for principals in their eagerness to develop their schools, to repeat the mistake of imagining that, merely by explaining what is to happen and/or issuing instructions, the planned change will happen” (2003: 107). Principals must realize that in order for change to take place, they must be actively involved in this change. They must acknowledge that a bottom up or horizontal structure is probably preferable in their schools, and that giving up some leadership roles to their educators, will result in them forging ahead to achieve the goals of the school.

2.8. Role of the principal in teacher leadership

The role of the principal is very important to teachers who are ‘empowered’ and ready to take on leadership roles. Goldring and Rallis see “teachers who are capable of assuming leadership roles, but who may not see this potential. In these cases, the principal-in-charge motivates and encourages, showing them that teacher leadership is possible” (1993: 38). For me it is important that principals recognise

the potential in members of their staff and encourage teachers to take on leadership roles. They can do this by creating an enabling environment in which teachers empower themselves to take ownership of leadership opportunities and roles. It is a possibility that, at times, teachers may be ‘selling themselves short’ by not taking that step forward and giving themselves the opportunity to lead. However, there are teachers, on the other hand, who are willing to broaden their roles when they work with principals who are collaborative, open, supportive and facilitative.

What should principals do to facilitate teacher leadership? Goldring and Rallis (1993) suggest that principals can facilitate teacher leadership by creating opportunities for teachers to engage in rewarding experiences, and motivating teachers to be active partners in school processes and improvement efforts. I feel that principals can make it possible for teachers to develop leadership, by supporting them, and providing opportunities for enhanced teacher contact and communication. They can also give teachers time for meetings and planning, and allocating time in the timetable for leadership activities. Principals must realize that rewards are important even if they are intrinsic, and these may include “a sense of efficacy, a sense of personal growth, social interaction and autonomy” (Goldring and Rallis 1993: 38). Peer contact and increased professional interaction with principals, can also be viewed as rewarding for teachers. In this way, they are recognized as contributing professionals.

Crowther et al (2002), in their interviews with case study principals, reveal a range of strategies that were employed to nurture teacher leaders in their schools and develop mature parallel–leader relationships. From this, they identified seven broad challenges: communicating a clear strategic intent, incorporating the aspirations and ideas of others, posing difficult-to-answer questions, making space for individual innovation, knowing when to step back, creating opportunities out of perceived difficulties and building on achievements to create a culture of success (p.65). If principals are able to do this, then teachers would take up the challenge of taking up

leadership positions. They would then feel that they have the support and the backing of the School Management Team (SMT) and the principal.

Grant (2005) argues that so often, principals are unaware of the strengths and capacity of their teachers, and do nothing to seek out this untapped potential. They simply rely on their School Management to support them in leadership and decision-making, regardless of the expertise, or lack thereof, of these senior members of staff. Grant continues that some principals might argue that, because their formal positions hold them accountable to the Department of Education, they cannot distribute leadership to others (2006: 527). I agree with Grant and I feel that this issue of being accountable to the Department of Education is what constrains many principals from empowering teachers to take on leadership roles.

A principal in Steyn and Squelch's research stated that if the principal "is the be all and end all, teachers cannot become empowered" (1997: 4). Empowering teachers, to become teacher leaders can only enhance school effectiveness. At the same time, principals should not and cannot abdicate their responsibilities of control and follow up, because they are still ultimately responsible for what happens within the school. This concurs with what Grant (2006) says about principals being accountable. Principals who do not distribute leadership, and instead, shoulder all the responsibilities, this "overloads them, resulting in incorrect and frequently imposed solutions" (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1992: 20). In order to remedy this situation, Fullan and Hargreaves suggest that since

educational leaders have no one with whom to share the burden of responsibility....giving teachers earlier experiences of leadership, increases the opportunities for delegation and reduces overload, enabling heads to be more selective and to set clearer priorities for what they do (1992: 20).

The South African Report of the Task team on Education Management Development suggests that,

managers can no longer simply wait for instructions or decisions from government. The pace of change, and the need to be adaptable and responsive to local circumstances requires that managers develop new skills and styles of working. They must be capable of providing leadership for teams, and able to interact with communities and stakeholders both inside and outside the system (1996: 14).

2.9. School Culture

According to Katzenmeyer and Moller, the most important factor in the development or obstruction of teacher leadership is the context of the school. For them, “a positive culture within the school fosters teacher leadership, which in turn produces positive results in student outcomes” (2001: 76). Culture, according to Peterson and Deal (1998), cited in Katzenmeyer and Moller, is “an underground stream of norms, values, beliefs, traditions and rituals that has built up over time as people work together, solve problems and confront challenges” (ibid: 76). I feel that when people work together, they build up a culture of collaboration. They feel good about working together and this spills over to other teachers who notice this culture developing. For Katzenmeyer & Moller, “the context for promoting teacher leadership is influenced by three factors:

- a) The relationship between adults in the school.
- b) The actual organizational structure.
- c) The actions of the principal” (2001: 79).

Context is also emphasized by Grant in her research on teacher leadership (2006). For her the South African context is unique because it is a developing country with an Apartheid history. She signals that this may give rise to a different understanding of teacher leadership from that of the first world countries.

For Leithwood, one of the obstacles to the development of teacher leadership is an “isolated professional culture”. To overcome this there should be:

collaborative cultures which encourage the exchange of ideas and endorse mutual problem solving, thereby providing rich opportunities for the exercise of teacher leadership and suitable motivation for potential teacher leaders to develop their capacities (2003: 198).

Fullan and Hargreaves state that this collaborative culture can be found everywhere in the life of the school:

In the gestures, jokes and glances that signal sympathy and understanding; in hard work and personal interest shown in corridors or outside classroom doors; in birthdays, treat days and other ceremonial celebrations; in the acceptance and inter-mixture of personal lives with professional ones; in overt praise, recognition and gratitude; and in sharing and discussion of ideas and resources (1992: 66).

According to Leithwood et. al. (1998: 132), a collaborative culture encourages the exchange of ideas and endorses mutual problem solving, thereby, providing rich opportunities for the exercise of teacher leadership and suitable motivation for future teachers to develop capacity. And, in the words of Muijs and Harris(2003: 444-445), “a teachers’ ability to lead has an influence on the quality of relationships and teaching, it builds self esteem and positive relationships within the school”. However, a collaborative culture is not necessarily always positive. The negative side is referred to by Fullan and Hargreaves (1992: 71) as “a balkanized teacher culture – a culture made up of separate and sometimes competing groups, jockeying for position and supremacy”. Teachers in this culture attach their loyalties and

identities to particular groups of their colleagues. These are the colleagues with whom they work most closely and spend most time with, and with whom they socialize most often in the classroom. Fullan and Hargreaves predict that this “Balkanization may lead to poor communication, indifference, or groups going their separate ways in a school” (1992: 72). This kind of culture can cause a split in schools wanting to encourage a collaborative culture. Teachers can work together to create disharmony and discourage colleagues who may want to take up leadership roles. In this situation, Fullan and Hargreaves suggest that Principals should use this kind of culture to their advantage by giving a member of a group a leadership role, and encouraging the others in the group to work together, in this way getting teachers working for the greater good of the school.

Hoy and Miskel (2001: 188) are of the opinion that “although frameworks for examining school culture in terms of the shared values, beliefs, and ideologies are available, the determination of culture at this level is not easy. The core values of a group or school may be easier to determine than the tacit assumptions, but the analysis remains difficult and time consuming”. Hoy and Miskel (2001: 188) further state that “examining the culture of schools provides a less rational, more uncertain, and less linear view of organizational life than the standard perspectives on structure, rationality and efficiency”.

2.10. Organisational Structure

The structure of the organization is the formal patterns that exist in schools that determine how individuals relate to one another. In South African schools this would mean the relationship of the principal with the School Management Teams (SMT) and the staff.

O’Neills (1994), cited in Bush & Thurlow, defines structure as :

Structure embodies both a formal description of roles, authority, relationships, and positions within an organization

and also the pragmatic notion that structural design should promote and facilitate organizational effectiveness. Structure ... is created to distribute and co-ordinate the work of people in the pursuit of organizational goals and objectives (2003: 65).

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) state that the leaders within the school and policymakers outside the school influence the organizational structure. They say that instead of providing collaboration and professional community, schools' structures often "wall off" teachers and parcel out time. This contributes to professional distance. Since structural changes are needed to promote teacher leadership, schools can be structured in ways that promote autonomous teams of teachers working together. Furthermore, they say that these structural systems may include the way we organize for teaching and learning, the way time and resources are used, the physical structures of school buildings, the way we make decisions in schools, the way information is shared, and the type of incentives offered.

In the South African context, the structure of the school is dictated by the Department of Education and Culture, with formal roles in the school for the principal, deputy principal, heads of department and teachers. These roles are stated in the Department of Education's Personnel Administrative Measure (PAM) document (1999). And as Bush (2003: 68) argues, "these allocations have a significant influence on school organization although the structure also includes informal posts appointed by the principal". If this is so, then, where is there place for teacher leaders in the South African context and what do South African policy documents have to say about teachers and leadership roles?

2.11. South African education policies

As mentioned earlier, the Department of Education's "Norms and Standards for Educators Document" (2000) lists the seven roles and competences of teachers. The

role that is of particular relevance here, is the role of the teacher as 'Leader, administrator and manager'. The document describes this role as follows:

The Educator will make decisions appropriate to the level, manage learning in the classroom, carry out classroom administrative duties efficiently and participate in school decision making structures. These competences will be performed in ways which are democratic, which support learners and colleagues, and which demonstrate responsiveness to changing circumstances and needs (1996: A47).

The document states that one of the duties of teachers is to participate in school decision-making structures. But are teachers doing this, and are they aware that they can take part in decision-making, or are principals monopolizing decision-making in schools?

The PAM document (1999) lists the duties and responsibilities of teachers. It states that management in education should be able to draw on the professional competences of teachers. It also states that they should build a sense of unity of purpose and should also reinforce their belief that they can make a difference. The authorities also need to allocate authority and responsibilities which will ensure the building of human resource capacity. An important point to note is that the document does suggest that principals can give roles to teachers. In addition to the core duties and responsibilities of teachers certain "specialized duties and responsibilities may be allocated to staff in an equitable manner by the appropriate representatives of the employer" (1999: C-63).

The PAM document lists some of the core duties and responsibilities of teachers as taking on a leadership role in respect of the subject, learning area or phase, sharing in the responsibilities of organizing and conducting extra and co-curricular

activities, contributing to the professional development of colleagues by sharing knowledge, ideas and resources, and participating in the school's governing body if elected to do so (1999: C-67-68). These are just some of the roles and responsibilities of educators. It is interesting to note that one of the core duties and responsibilities of the principal according to the PAM document is to "ensure that workloads are equitably distributed among staff" (1999: C-64).

2.12 Conclusion

This literature review explored definitions of teacher leadership and the different types of leadership roles. It also considered why there is a need for teacher leadership and how distributed leadership can lead to effect a collaborative culture in schools. Some requirements for teacher leadership, as well as some barriers to teacher leadership were highlighted. The role of the principal in teacher leadership was looked at since it is extremely significant and leads to the empowering of teachers to take on leadership roles. The significance of culture and structure of schools were discussed. Finally, the chapter focused on some South African education policies with particular reference to policy provisions for leadership.

The next chapter will focus on the methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the research design is explained. An outline and discussion of the research approach and methodology is followed by an explanation of data collection and analysis procedures, and the chapter concludes with the limitations of the research.

3.2. Research Aim and Questions

As mentioned in chapter one, my aim was to explore the notion of teacher leadership in schools in a bid to add to the literature on teacher leadership for the South African context. I chose to research in the interpretive paradigm and used a case study approach which included three urban schools. I used questionnaires and interviews as a basis for exploring why teachers are undertaking leadership roles or what factors hinder them from assuming leadership roles.

To remind the Reader, I repeat my research question here:

1. What factors exist in schools that help or hinder teacher leadership?
 - 1.1. What structures need to be in place for teachers to be leaders?
 - 1.2. How does the culture of the school support or create barriers to teacher leadership?
2. What personal factors enhance or inhibit teacher leadership?

3. Research Paradigm

Given the nature of my research questions, an interpretative qualitative paradigm was used. The interpretive approach was used, as it provides relevant information to the researcher, about “the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind social action” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999: 6). The interpretive paradigm according to Cohen et al (2000: 22) is “characterized by a concern for the individual to understand the subjective world of the human experience. To retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated, efforts are made to get inside the person and understand from within.” Pring (2000: 96) argues that “we need to know their intentions and their motives. We need to know how they understood or interpreted the situation. For this reason, researchers talk of the ‘*subjective meanings*’ of those whom they are researching – that is, the different understandings and interpretations which the participants bring with them to the situation.” Wellington (2000: 16), acknowledges that the interpretive researcher accepts that the “observer makes a difference to the observed and that reality is a human construct. The researcher’s aim is to explore perspectives and shared meanings and to develop insight into situations, for example, schools and classrooms”. In a similar vein, Terre Blanche and Kelly describe interpretive researchers as people who “want to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations or phenomena as they occur in the real world, and therefore want to study them in their natural setting”(1999: 127). And since my research questions are interpretive in nature I want to understand the perceptions of teachers on teacher leadership that they bring to their situation, their ‘subjective meaning’.

The research was done in the form of a case study of three schools. Cohen et. al. (2000: 181) believes that case studies “provide a unique example of real people in real situations enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles”. According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) case studies have several hallmarks in that they are concerned with rich and vivid descriptions of events, it provides a chronological narrative of events relevant to the case, it includes descriptions of events with an analysis of them, it focuses on

individuals or groups with the aim of understanding their perceptions of events. They further suggest that case studies highlight specific events that are relevant to the case. In these case studies the researcher is integrally involved in the case. And finally Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) suggest that in a case study an attempt is made “to portray the richness of the case in writing up the report” (1995: 317). Lindegger (1999: 255) also believes that case studies are “intensive investigations of particular individuals usually descriptive in nature and provide rich longitudinal information about individuals or particular situations”. He further states that case studies can have limitations: “there may be problems with the validity of information; causal links are difficult to test; and generalizations cannot be made from single case studies” (p. 256).

3.4. Selection of Schools and participants

In order to gain access to teachers and principals, three primary schools in the suburb of Raisethorpe in Pietermaritzburg, were selected. These schools are all in the same area with a similar pupil population and I chose these schools because of perceptions in the community that the principals in the schools led in very different ways and exhibited different management styles. I also chose these schools because of convenience and their close proximity to the school at which I teach. One of the schools in the study was my own and the other two were nearby. The schools were close enough to conduct interviews in the afternoons, without keeping teachers too late. Convenience sampling is suitable for case study research. Cohen et. al., say that convenience sampling “involves choosing the nearest individuals to serve as respondents and continuing that process until the required sample size has been obtained” (2000: 102). For my research I simply chose the sample from those to whom I had easy access. And as Cohen et. al. remind us, “it does not represent any group apart from itself, it does not seek to generalize about the wider population” (ibid).

The participants were all the teachers from the three schools in the study who answered the questionnaires and a selection of five who were selected for the interview. This also includes the three principals.

3.4.1. Context of schools

School X

School X is situated in an urban area with tarred roads leading up to it. The school has remote controlled access gates and is fully fenced and secure. There are twenty nine teachers on the staff, six of them employed by the Governing Body. Of these twenty nine teachers, eight are male and twenty three are female. One teacher is black and twenty eight are Indian. There are also three part time teachers who teach Indian languages. The school has two clerks. With regards to buildings and infrastructure, there is one triple storey building, a single storey Junior Primary block and a double storey administration block. The school also has a fully-functional computer room as well as a well-stocked library. There is one multi-purpose ground and a tarmac surface that is used for volleyball and netball. The school services pupils from a middle income background. The school has eight hundred and seventy eight learners of which twenty percent are Black learners, two white learners and about eighty percent of the learners are Indian. The management team at the school comprises one Principal (male), one Deputy Principal and three Heads of Department. The Deputy Principal is female and two of the three Heads of Department are males. The management team is all Indian.

School Y

The school is situated in the same urban area as School X with tarred roads leading up to it. The school is fully fenced with a gate manned by a security guard. There are twenty seven teachers on the staff of which three are employed by the Governing Body. There are four part time Indian Language teachers and a full time isiZulu teacher (paid by the Governing Body). There are two full time clerks and one part time clerk. Of the Twenty seven teachers, eleven are male and sixteen are female; one teacher is Black and twenty six are Indian. The school has a fully-functional, newly

refurbished computer room as well as a fully-stocked library with a permanent librarian in attendance. The school also has a teacher who has enrolled in a Learnership Programme. The school has one double storey building, two single storey buildings, two blocks that were intended for specialist rooms but now house classrooms, and one pre-fab building. There is one small multi-purpose ground as well as another smaller ground that is used for netball. There is a tarmac area that doubles as an assembly area and a volleyball court. The school has nine hundred and forty learners of which three percent are Black and about ninety two percent are Indian. There are four white learners currently enrolled at the school. The management team consists of one Principal (male), one Deputy Principal and three Heads of Department. The Deputy Principal is female and two of the three Heads of Department are males. All members of the management team are Indian.

School Z

School Z is situated in the same urban area as school X and Y. There are fourteen teachers in the school of which three are paid by the Governing Body. Two of these teachers are male and twelve are female. All of the teachers are Indian. There are four part time teachers; three of which teach Indian languages and the fourth teaches isiZulu. There is one clerk at the school. The school is fully fenced and well secured. The school has one triple storey building, one double storey administration block, two single storey buildings that house the Junior Primary Phase and two additional single storey buildings for handwork and PE. There is one large multi-purpose ground. There is a tarmac area on which volley ball and tennis are played. The school has a computer room and a library which is not functional because the school does not have a librarian. Thirty percent of the learners come from middle income backgrounds and seventy percent from a lower income background. The school has five hundred and fourteen learners. Forty two percent of the learner population is black and fifty eight percent are Indian. The management team consists of one Principal and two Heads of Department. The principal is female and one of the two Heads of Department is female. All members of the management team are Indian.

3.4.2. Gaining Access

Prior to the commencement of the study, the three schools were visited in order to gain the permission of principals to use the schools in the study. I had to get the principals' permission first before approaching the Department of Education so that the principals would be aware of my intention to use their schools in the study. Once permission was gained, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education was approached for permission to conduct research in the schools (see Appendix i). The letter of permission from the Department of Education (see Appendix ii) as well as a letter from my supervisor (see Appendix iii) were handed to all three principals.

3.4.3. Ethical Issues and consent

At all three schools, short staff meetings were arranged by the three principals so that staff could be addressed, the study was explained to them and their consent gained. All respondents who answered the questionnaires had to sign consent forms (see Appendix vii) that guaranteed their anonymity. Cohen et. al. (2001: 50), state that "much social research necessitates obtaining the consent and co-operation of subjects who are to assist in investigations and significant others in the institution or organization providing the research facilities". They further state that a "participant is anonymous if you cannot say who they are from the information given. If you cannot identify the participant then that participant's privacy is guaranteed." However, I did ask for phone numbers to be penciled in the questionnaires and permission to phone if selected for the interview. Cohen et. al. are of the opinion that "a subject agreeing to a face-to-face interview, can in no way expect anonymity. At the most, the interviewer can promise confidentiality"(2001: 61). I agree with this because, as the interviewer I had to have face-to-face contact with the interviewees. Cohen et. al. (2001: 62) suggests that the only "way of protecting the participants right to privacy is through the promise of confidentiality. This means that although researchers know who has provided the information or are able to identify participants from the information given, they in no way make the connection known publicly"

3.5. Research Methods

Questionnaires as well as interviews were used to collect data in the study. Kanjee defines a questionnaire “as a group of written questions used to gather information from respondents, and is regarded as one of the commonest tools for gathering data in the social sciences” (1999: 294). The questionnaire was given to all level one teachers in each of the three schools that I had chosen. The questionnaire included open-ended as well as closed questions. Open-ended questions according to Kanjee, “allow respondents to communicate their experiences or opinion about a specific issue in their own words, without any restrictions” while closed questions, on the other hand, “do not allow the respondents to provide answers in their own words, but force the respondent to select one or more choices from a fixed list of answers provided” (1999: 295). From the feedback received from the questionnaires, I then chose a selection of respondents for a semi-structured interview. I made a careful study of the responses to the questionnaires, and I then chose five teachers to take part in the interviews. The selection of interviewees for the interview was purposive. The reason I did this was because I was looking for respondents who had undertaken a number of leadership roles in their schools. According to Cohen et. al. (2000: 103), “in purposive sampling, researchers handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgement of their typicality. In this way, they build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs”.

The other form of data collection used was interviewing which, according to Terre Blanche & Kelly (1999: 128) “is a more natural form of interacting with people. It gives us an opportunity to get to know people quite intimately, so that we can really understand how they think and feel”. There are many different types of interviews, but I chose to do semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interview, according to Hitchcock & Hughes (1989: 83), “allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee’s response”. The five teachers, as well as the three principals, were each interviewed individually. All the semi-structured interviews were audio taped since permission for

this was obtained. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim and the results were analysed.

3.6. Data Collection

3.6.1. Pilot study

At the outset of my drawing up of my research instruments, I enlisted the help of two colleagues from different schools that were not part of my study, to trial my questionnaire. From the feedback I received, I made changes to the questionnaire. Kanjee (1999: 299) recommends that a “pilot study be conducted to check the questionnaire before it is administered to the final sample”.

3.6.2. Conducting the Questionnaires

Questionnaires were handed to staff members in all three schools (see Appendix iv). The main aim in giving the questionnaire to all level one teachers in all three schools, was firstly, to collect information to answer the research questions and secondly, to then choose the participants to interview. The main concern in sampling, according to Durrheim is “representativeness” (1999: 44). “The aim is to select a sample that will be representative of the population about which the researcher aims to draw conclusions (Durrheim1999: 44). However, my participant selection was not representative but more purposive, since I chose educators that have undertaken a number of leadership roles in each of the schools, to be interviewed.

All staff members were informed that participation in the study was on a voluntary basis, and that no names of schools or names of staff members would be used in the study. Schools participating in the study are therefore referred to as School X, School Y and School Z. Educators who were interviewed are referred to as Educator X1, X2, Y1, Y2 and Z1. Staff members were requested to fill in the consent forms that were included with the questionnaires. Once questionnaires were completed, they were to be placed in the envelopes provided and sealed. Questionnaires were then collected. Of the twenty questionnaires given to School X, sixteen were collected. In the case of

School Y, seventeen were given and seventeen collected and for School Z, ten were given and seven were collected. The percentage of questionnaires that were completed and returned was as follows: School X - 80%, School Y – 100% and School Z – 70%. Overall, 91% of questionnaires were completed and returned.

3.6.3. Conducting the interviews

The candidates for the interviews were selected after I made a careful study of the questionnaires. I selected those teachers who had undertaken a number of leadership roles in their schools. I selected two teachers from School X, two teachers from School Y and one teacher from School Z for the semi-structured interview (see Appendix v). The reason that I chose only one teacher from School Z was that it was evident that this person had undertaken a number of roles, while a number of the other teachers from school Z had chosen not to answer the questionnaire in its entirety. As mentioned earlier, the main aim of the questionnaire was to generate data from which to make a selection for the interviews. I made contact with the candidates I selected by phoning them to obtain permission for the interview. I then sent letters to these five teachers. Once contact was made with the five interviewees, dates and times were set for the interviews.

I also telephoned the three principals and made appointments for the interviews. All interviews were conducted after school hours, either in their classrooms in the case of the teachers, and in the office, in the case of principals. Semi-structured interviews with principals were conducted in their offices (see Appendix vi). One of the interviews with a principal was conducted during school hours, during my free time because this time slot coincided with the time that the principal was able to give me to conduct the interview. All interviews were audio-taped and then transcribed. According to Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999: 129), “the advantages of recording are obvious: it allows you to keep a full record of the interview without having to be distracted by detailed note-keeping. It also shows the interviewee that you take what they say seriously”. Hitchcock and Hughes concur with this view. Their view is that “tape recording of the interview session will produce the most complete record of

what was said” (1989: 94). At the outset of the interview I asked interviewees permission to record the interview. I explained to them that recording the interviews would ensure accuracy in the transcription phase and would save time in the analysis phase of the process. This is in keeping with the ideas of Hitchcock and Hughes (1989: 94) who state that the “teacher researcher will, in any case, have to obtain the permission of individuals to tape record the interviews and conversations”. In line with the thinking of Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999), I started the interviews by first giving the interviewees a brief idea of what the interview was about. Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999) also suggest that “even though you may be recording the interview, it is a good idea to scribble down questions or thoughts that occur to you while the interviewee is speaking” (1999: 130). I did this, which is why the questions that I asked did not follow the order that I had written down. This approach enabled me to follow up on the leads from the answers given by the interviewees and probe further where necessary. The interviews with each of the teachers lasted about fifteen to twenty minutes, and with the principals, about half an hour each. Terre Blanche and Kelly (1999: 130) say that “interviews typically last from twenty minutes to an hour and a half – people find it difficult to concentrate much beyond that”. The interviews were transcribed on the day that each one was completed and the audio tapes were stored in a safe place. As Lindegar emphasizes, because of the importance of “checking the original data from which the case study is drawn, contemporary case studies often use methods such as video or audio tapes, which provide data that can be re-analysed by other researchers” (1999: 256).

3.7. Data analysis

Data analysis according to Terre Blanche and Kelly “involves reading through your data repeatedly, and engaging in activities of breaking the data down (thematizing and categorizing) and building it up again in novel ways (elaborating and interpreting)” (1999: 140). I did this with the transcriptions, I broke down the data and looked for key words and phrases. I also looked for ideas and themes and made detailed notes to link them together. I looked for words that gave me an idea of the qualities that teachers possess that would make them leaders. I made notes on the roles that

teachers took on and *how* they were selected to these roles. I selected ideas and themes that related to the structure and culture of the school. I looked at the roles that the principal played in facilitating or hindering teachers taking on these roles. Detailed notes were made on the barriers to teacher leadership. I also looked at the advantages to teachers taking on roles.

3.8. Limitations of the research

One of the shortcomings of my research is that I am an educator in one of the schools in the study. The reasons I chose to do the research in my own school is that I was very aware of what is happening in my school in terms of teacher leadership and that the school has the reputation of being an “effective school”. I must, however, emphasize that, at no stage, did I use my position to influence the data capturing process in any way, and at all times remained the researcher (and not a participant) during the entire research process. However, since the study was done in the interpretive paradigm, I acknowledge that the ‘researcher’ is not neutral and my interpretations of findings will inevitably be biased. To compensate for this in some way my analysis of results were done strictly according to what was said by both the principal and the teachers. I tried my best to bracket out perceptions of what takes place in the school and instead “listened” very carefully to what my participants had to say. Furthermore my position as teacher at the school may have prevented the two participant teachers from my school from being honest as they perhaps would have been, had an “outside researcher” asked the same questions.

The study was limited as it was conducted in one urban area and only included three schools. The study did not include schools in rural areas. However, this was for purposes of convenience as mentioned earlier. I also made the choice of doing case study research in three schools because I wanted to capture in-depth rich data. I did not want to generalize my findings. In order to be more objective, I used triangulation. Triangulation occurred through two participant sources and through the use of two methods. Terre Blanche & Kelly explain triangulation as “collecting material in as many different ways and from as many diverse sources as possible”

(1999: 128). I have used questionnaires and interviews with teachers as well as interviews with principals in obtaining my data, in order to make my research as valid as possible.

My sampling of participants was purposive, in that I chose from the questionnaires teachers who had undertaken many leadership roles in their schools. These teachers were selected for the interview. Many teachers chose not to answer the questionnaire in full, and a few teachers did not fill in all the roles that they had undertaken. My decision to eliminate these teachers from the interview phase may well have biased my data. In a perhaps future study, the reasons why teachers *do not* take on leadership roles would be an interesting question to explore.

The foregoing constitutes an outline and discussion of the research design employed in this study. The next chapter focuses on the findings of my research.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

The aim of the research was to explore the factors that help, or hinder, teacher leadership, by examining both the structure and culture of the school, and the personal factors that enhance or inhibit teachers taking on these roles. In this chapter, I analyze the responses of the teachers and the principals to questions asked in both the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews.

4.2. Analysis of questionnaires

Of the thirty nine questionnaires returned, thirty one teachers indicated that they undertook leadership roles. Nine teachers did not take on any leadership roles. Of the thirty one who indicated that they are in leadership roles, leadership mainly took the form of convening sporting committees. Some of the teachers chaired learning area committees, whilst others assumed various other roles such as being on the teacher development team, coordinated fun runs and debutante balls.

After a careful analysis of the responses to the questionnaire, it was found that teachers were divided on how decisions were taken at their schools. School X teachers felt that decisions were taken after consultation with staff and that the process was democratically carried out. School Y teachers were divided on this issue of how decisions were taken. Some teachers felt that decisions were made democratically in consultation with the whole staff, while others felt that decisions were made by management, and then merely communicated to staff members. School Z educators felt that decisions were taken by management and teachers as a team.

In order for collegiality to work, I believe that a 'lateral or horizontal' structure is desirable. This is in line with Bush's research, which shows that "teachers should be involved in decision making and own the outcomes of discussions" (2003: 70). Singh & Manser (2002: 56) also state that "in order for collegiality to have an impact in schools, principals must ensure that certain structures are in place".

The participants of the three schools were again divided as to the management style in the school. While the majority of the teachers at all three schools said that the management style was democratic, School Z teachers were of the opinion that their management style was both autocratic and democratic, which goes against what they had to say in the questionnaires, about how decisions are taken at their schools. Teachers in school Z stated that decisions were taken democratically after consultation with staff. If decisions are taken after consultation with all members of staff, or at staff meetings, this requires and implies that management styles will be democratic. In order for more teachers to willingly and easily take on leadership roles they must feel that they are part of the decision-making process.

Most of the teachers from all three schools were of the opinion that the atmosphere in their schools encouraged leadership roles. School Z teachers were again divided in their responses to this question. Some felt that the atmosphere at their school encouraged leadership roles, while others felt that they were discouraged from taking on leadership roles. In ensuring the principle of democratic governance, school structures and culture would have to change to allow for greater participation of teachers.

From the literature referred to in Chapter Two, it is clear that in order for a person to execute his/her role functions in a leadership position, time must be available in school, and after school, for meetings and planning of activities (Leithwood et. al. 1999). From the responses of educators, it is evident that personal time was encroached on, in taking on leadership roles. Teachers had to do planning after school

hours and even be on duty at weekends. Those teachers who served on the School Governing Body attended meetings in the evenings.

It emerged from the questionnaires that the co-operation and support of colleagues is important for one to successfully undertake tasks and to accomplish aims. Many of the teachers in the study said that they had the support and co-operation of their colleagues while they were in leadership roles. Katzenmeyer and Moller are of the opinion that by “holding the respect of their colleagues, capable teacher leaders can mentor new teachers, assist in improving instructional practice, and help to develop the capacity of other teachers” (2001: 34). I believe that when a person has the respect of colleagues, a person is seen as being capable and able to complete tasks. Projects and tasks are easier to complete with the support of others on the staff.

4.3. Analysis of interviews

After a careful analysis of the interviews, some interesting findings emerged in terms of teacher leadership in the South African context. The analysis is presented according to the following themes: Teacher leaders and values; Roles that teachers take on; Distributed versus delegated teacher leadership; Team work and team teaching; Barriers to teacher leadership and finally advantages of teacher leadership.

4.3.1. Teacher leaders and values

All three principals in this study saw teacher leaders as people who are committed, enthusiastic, prepared to take on responsibilities, and are people who are listened to. The following were the views of Principal X on teacher leaders:

Principal X: Committed ones,..... see teaching as a vocation rather than occupation, enthusiastic people, dedicated people, loyal people who understand the significance of teamwork.

All three principals believe that teachers who want to be leaders should be committed

to the teaching process. This concurs with Grant's (2006) research that values such as, the courage to lead and take risks, the perseverance to continue with the change process, regardless of setbacks or resistance from colleagues, as well as the enthusiasm to lead and to encourage enthusiasm in those with whom one is working, are critical aspects of teacher leadership. She argues that these are the values and attitudes a teacher leader would need to foreground in order to effect change in South African schools (Grant: 2006). I agree with principal X when he says that teaching should be a vocation rather than an occupation. If teaching is seen as a vocation then every effort should be made to make it as rewarding as possible. This view of all three principals on teacher leaders concurs, with what Goldring and Rallis (1993: 380) write: "that the principal-in-charge should motivate and encourage teachers to take on leadership roles". Principals must realize as Lumby (2003), states, that "in order for change to take place they must be actively involved in this change" (p.107).

Principals Y's views were in keeping with the views of Grant (2006).

Principal Y: I think that educators who have the initiative, that's crucial, they would become good leaders, and also educators who are prepared to take on responsibility. And, I also like the risk takers, they will make good leaders. I believe in that. If we are going to be controlled and governed by procedures all the time, then unfortunately, I can't see us taking on leadership roles.

He felt that the risk takers would make good leaders. He also felt that you cannot be governed by procedures all the time. Leadership by teachers according to Harris is a "shared commodity owned by those that work within the school" (2005: 80). If this is the case in schools, then teachers will feel that they are part of the school community and that they can and will make a difference with their valuable contributions. If teachers take the risk, head committees, and come up with ideas for the improvement of their schools then this can only lead to better working environments. Harley et. al.,

are of the view that certain schools provided a context that is more amenable than others for teachers to carry out their particular roles effectively (2000: 297).

I believe that principals should acknowledge that all staff members have potential, and should encourage them to take on leadership roles, so as to harness and develop their potential and build capacity. This is in keeping with the ideas of Goldring & Rallis who suggest that by “creating opportunities for teachers to engage in rewarding experiences, principals in charge motivate teachers to be active partners in school processes and improvement efforts” (1993: 41). In this study, all three principals indicated that they encouraged teachers to take on roles. Principal X said that staff are always asked “who would like to” take on a role and that there are very few instances where he delegates these roles. However principal Z, had the following to say:

Because when we have our meetings and we tell them, look, put yourself into that because you will learn. I always tell them that, look, if you ever had experience in one or two of these, try something else.

Whilst Principal Z encourages the staff to take on roles and even to try taking on new roles, Principal Y indicated that although there were opportunities for teachers, teachers were not encouraged directly. But he did indicate that if a teacher had “come up to me”, that he would have supported such a teacher. The language used by this principal indicates that leadership roles in this school were not really encouraged. This is in contrast to principal Y’s view mentioned earlier that “risk takers” would make good leaders.

What are some of the qualities that make a good leader? When teachers were asked to list some of the qualities they thought a person should possess, they responded that a person should have compassion, the ability to listen, be motivated, have a willingness to work, and be democratic and approachable. However, some of the qualities that the interviewees said they possessed were: being motivated, being a good organizer,

being able to work in a team and being hardworking. The quality of being able to work in a team is the only quality that is in keeping with what the principals thought teacher leaders should possess.

4.3.2. Teacher leadership and roles that teachers take on

Teacher leadership was defined and understood by all the teachers in terms of roles. The term teacher leadership was a new concept to the teachers and had to be explained prior to the interviews. Harley et. al. (2000) also refers to the “possibility of teachers fulfilling particular roles” (p.297). This concept is fairly new in the South African context. Steyn & Squelch (1997), refer to the roles that teacher take on in the context of teacher empowerment.

Leadership roles can be both formal and informal. The teachers in this study are taking on numerous roles over and above the role of teacher in the classroom which, in itself, is a multifaceted role. Some of these roles include being the representative on the School Governing body and being a staff representative at management meetings. These are examples of formal roles. Convening sports committees and chairing learning area committees are seen as informal roles, as seen in the examples given by Leithwood et. al. (1999), referred to in Chapter Two.

Teachers are leaders in the classroom and their workloads are such that they already spend a vast amount of time in school, and out of school, preparing for their lessons and their duties at school. Katzenmeyer & Moller (2003: 11) believe “that all teachers can select appropriate leadership roles for themselves, given their own experience, confidence level, skills and knowledge”. These roles differ in each school depending on the context of that school. It would seem that teachers in this study are undertaking both formal and informal roles. The following are just some examples of the formal and informal roles that teachers undertake.

Educator X 1: the formal leadership roles will be on the governing body,

Staff rep at management meetings... getting curriculum matters sorted out..... organised fun runs.

Educator X2: examinations officer I am in the Maths committee.....
Chairperson of the EMS committee, fun run committee, soccer Committee, I head the athletics committee. I am also involved in the fund raising committee.

Some of the other roles undertaken by other teachers include, serving on debutantes committees, the speech committee, coordinating various sports committees and being part of the staff development team.

4.3.3. Distributed versus delegated teacher leadership

In order for schools to function effectively, there have to be certain structures in place. In South Africa, the formal structure of schools is prescribed by the Department of Education. The number of Deputy Principals and Heads of Department that a school has is decided by the Department of Education, and the role functions of these management members, are listed in the PAM document (1999).

In response to the question posed to principals as to what the formal structures in their schools are, the principals answered as follows:

Principal X : One deputy principal and three heads of department.

Principal Y: One deputy principal and three HOD's, two in the intermediate phase and one in the foundation.

Principal Z: Our school has no deputy principal, just one HOD in the senior primary phase, and one HOD in the junior primary phase.

Since South Africa is seen as a relatively new transforming democracy, there are still difficulties experienced by the Department of Education in establishing the formal structures in some schools. Many schools are still without management members, as seen in School Z, where a Deputy Principal has not yet been appointed. From

interviews with Principals in 1999, Bush (2003: 72) says “that many principals have chosen to establish acting deputy principals and HOD posts pending the possible establishment of substantive posts by the regional office”. He is also of the opinion that although “the central control of senior posts inhibits the ability of South African principals to express their educational values through school structures, it does not prevent creative leaders from partially circumventing the imposed structure to invent their own additional posts” (2003: 72). Principal Z however, undertook to carry the additional load of the Deputy Principal as well as her own. Her response was, “so when it comes to all the additional load, I have to carry that load as far as things go in the office”. However, later in the interview, Principal Z does say that she gives leadership roles to the teachers in her school.

We give leadership roles to our level 1 educators. We have committees and we get them to head the committees...

This is in line with material in the literature review that suggests that one of the things principals can do is to provide opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991: 23), are of the opinion that “leadership that neither understands nor involves the teacher is therefore likely to be leadership that fails”. Bush (2003: 65) also states that “the notion of structure being ‘created’ is significant because it underlines the potential for managers to restructure the organization to meet changing requirements”.

To the question, “What leadership roles have you undertaken at school?” the response from Educator X2 was;

Educator X2: I have, basically been handed the task of the examination officer
.... Chairperson of the EMS committee... Convenor of cricket...
fund-raising.

Educator X2 says that he was handed the role of examinations officer. He was handed the role by members of management staff who felt that he was capable of

completing the task at hand. He said that the teachers were very pleased with what he had done.

Educator X2: they said that first time in this school, they received a booklet that was as comprehensive as that, laid out as it was and easy to understand.

The principal in educator X 2's school confirms that roles are delegated to teachers.

Principal X : We also delegate those role functions down to level one educators. It is not done from a perspective where we go from a top-down structure, duties actually work from a bottom up structure. We do it collectively as a staff.

Principal X says that they delegate role functions to level one educators. This concurs with Grant's study when she says that "many South African schools are still bureaucratically and hierarchically organized" (2006: 525). Given that this principal seems to delegate, at times, role functions down to level one teachers, it would seem that he is responsive, to some degree, to the needs of the school. Sayed's term 'window dressing' is useful here. For him 'window dressing' refers to situations when a behaviour "appears responsive to the need for change, without introducing fundamental changes, and, on the contrary, every effort to maintaining the status quo"(2003: 5).

Muijs and Harris (2003: 442) point out that "top-down management structures in schools are a major impediment to the development of teacher leadership, as they militate against teachers attaining autonomy and taking on leadership roles within the school".

It would seem then, that roles in School X are delegated rather than distributed. In other words, roles are given as opposed to them evolving from the strengths of

individual teachers themselves. Muijs and Harris (2003) argue that leadership need not rest with the principal but that anyone can assume a leadership role. She also found that heads use a number of strategies including involving others in decision making and allocating tasks to teachers. Educator X1 said that in his school teachers were encouraged to take on leadership roles.

Educator X1: At our school we have a policy that we need to equip other teachers and give other teachers the experience, beside management, get other teachers to take on responsibilities. They are quite happy with idea that other teachers were taking on the responsibility which they should have taken on themselves.

The Report of the Task team for Education Management Development (1996) also suggests that “principals and teachers have consistently been at the receiving end of top-down management structures” (1996: 19). If teachers are to take on roles voluntarily and not have them delegated, then the structure of the school as well as the distribution of roles will have to be reconsidered.

Most of the interviewees in this study were either nominated to their roles by members of staff or a committee. In other words leadership was delegated, very few of the roles were taken on by the teachers voluntarily, suggesting that a form of distributed leadership did not prevail in the school.

The educators in the study took on additional roles because of the following reasons:

..

Educator Y2: Actually the confidence some of my colleagues have in me as well, because they nominated me in some of these roles, it shows that they have some confidence in me.

These roles were undertaken by the teachers because they saw it has a challenge, for the experience and because colleagues had confidence in them taking on these roles.

All of these reasons give a person the confidence and the courage to take up challenging positions that others do not want to take. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991: 30) are of the opinion that “teachers rarely confront and attempt to clarify and develop their sense of purpose”. This is not so here. These teachers were encouraged to take on roles by their peers who have confidence in them.

The requirements of the schooling system in South Africa are changing, and there is a need for principals to realize that they cannot assume all leadership roles themselves and that some of these roles can be undertaken by members of staff. This is in keeping with research done by Grant in the South African context. She says that “teachers, principals and schools need time to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for distributed leadership and teacher leadership to become a reality” (2006: 529). Along with Grant, I agree that principals need to be supported as they learn to delegate authority, and teachers need to be supported, as they take up their leadership roles. Educator Z felt that this was not happening in her school. She said that:

We where actually stifled in a way because we were not given all the opportunities, there was not much leeway given. I took on the responsibility because nobody else wanted to do it, but I found that, my principal, did not allow me the opportunity, to grow and learn, in that, there were things that it was the first time I was learning.

The report by the Task Team on Education Management Development (1996: 32) states, that “resistance to change flourishes where there is poor communication, little or no active participation and involvement in decisions, and where tensions are allowed to simmer unchecked”. The report further suggests that to overcome this resistance, there should be open lines of communication, participation and involvement of all stakeholders and an atmosphere of facilitation, support, negotiation and agreement.

The important question that can then be asked is, who is going to provide this support? Will this support come from the Department of Education or will this support have to come from within the school itself? Furthermore, are teachers given the opportunity to undertake leadership roles in schools and do they have a greater say in the running of the school? When asked the question, “How is your school organized in terms of leadership and management?” Principal Y responded as follows:

Principal Y: We have sub-committees at school and we have various structures that see to both the academic, extra-curricular and the co-curricular activities and basically, the convenors of these committees are teachers, level 1 and level 2 teachers. So there are opportunities here at school in terms of leadership and management.

Since all three schools give leadership roles to their educators, the question that can then be asked is whether these positions are given freely to teachers, or whether teachers are volunteering for these positions. The response by the principals, however, was that roles are given voluntarily. The teachers, on the other hand, stated that they were nominated into their roles. All three principals said that roles were given on a voluntary basis. Principal Y said that although roles were given voluntarily, they did look the expertise that a person had to lead or to convene. Principal Z said that teachers in her school put their names in a list.

Principal Z: Educators are given a list of committees that we have and then we sit down and say, right okay, this is the first committee. All the people who would like to serve on this committee, fine and they give us their names and we slot them in.

If teachers are volunteering to take on these roles, it may suggest that teachers want a greater say in the running of the school and that they want to make a difference to the

effectiveness of the school. Alternatively, it may simply indicate that teachers are volunteering because of an expectation of policy by management that they take on a specified number of roles, or they may simply be volunteering to enhance the scores they receive under the new system of Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). Katzenmeyer & Moller (2003: 82) write that “teachers will be motivated to remain in leadership roles if they experience greater control over their work and if the organizational structures support their efforts to make changes”. I agree with this as it would seem then that what teachers want is the support of management in the roles that they take on and greater confidence from management in them to take on these roles, and to complete them successfully.

4.3.4. Team work and Team teaching: An aspect of teacher leadership

From the principals’ perspective, the culture that exists in the three schools in the study are:

Principal X: One of co-operation, there is a large amount of trust that goes on.

Principal Y: I am a firm believer that teamwork should be the order of the day.
.... sharing information and accountability.

Principal Z: It is a positive culture, you know, they are for teaching and learning....
We try as far as possible to work as a team.

Principal Z states that they work as a team. Working as a team does not necessarily mean that teamwork is taking place. It could just mean that the teachers come together and work together on a particular project.

According to Leithwood et. al.(1998: 132), “a collaborative culture encourages the exchange of ideas and endorses mutual problem solving, thereby providing rich opportunities for the exercise of teacher leadership and suitable motivation for potential teacher leaders to develop capacity”. And, as Muijs and Harris (2003: 445) argues, “teachers’ ability to lead has an influence on the quality of relationships and teaching, builds self esteem and positive relationships within the school”.

This idea is reflected in the opinion of Principal Y. He says:

In this institution if one looks at ownership, the only way we can encourage ownership is if the educators are involved in terms of leadership at the school.

Sometimes the culture of the school makes taking on leadership very easy. If there is collegiality among members of the staff then they help one another and they work as teams. Principal X and his management team support staff in working together.

Principal X: We encourage staff to take on as much as possible, okay, with the support. Whatever it is in terms of assistance that they require, we make ourselves available as management.

Principal Z as well, encourages staff members to take on roles.

Principal Z: Because when we have our meetings and all we tell them look, put yourself into that because you will learn. I always tell them that look, if you ever had experience in one or two of these, try something else.

Principal Z also stated that they need to make everyone aware that they work as a team, and that if they are working as a team, that respect begets respect.

The culture of the school is very important for the creation of an environment that is conducive to teachers taking on leadership roles. There must be co-operation between teachers on the staff, and teachers should share ideas and plan their work together to help and encourage one another.

The culture of the schools discussed in the study is one described from the perspective of the principals. Both principal Y and principal Z stated that teamwork was part of the culture of the school. But, is teamwork really taking place? Is teamwork, the norm in the school, or is it just done in some instances when something needs to be done or some function is taking place that requires the input of all members of staff? All three principals said that the teachers in their school sit together and plan their work in teams. In terms of teachers planning of work in their phases and learning areas, this is now required by the Department of Education (Norms and Standards for Educators 2000). It would seem, then, that in this study, only the Junior Primary Phase teachers are working in teams, in that, they plan every week and all the classes in one particular grade are doing the same work each day. But what about the rest of the school? Is teamwork, with regard to planning of the work, taking place? The three principals only mentioned teamwork in relation to planning of work. Principal X had the following to say about planning in his school.

Principal X: At this school, the teachers across the grade, they work together in terms of the materials that need to be done for the year, even the turning out of worksheets, it is a shared responsibility. That prevails right through in every learning are, so it is not just dominated by one person.

The question then to be asked is, how do teachers feel about working in teams, and is there any evidence of team work or team teaching taking place in schools. If teachers are working in teams, then who is leading these teams?

Educator X2: Myself and the principal, we have swopped classes just for one day where he has come to my classes and taught the Mathematics and I went to his classes. We found that the children actually found it refreshing....

Educator X and the principal swapped classes for one day and for one lesson only, because of time constraints and the rigid structure of the timetable.

Educator Y2: Well, there was, when we did IQMS, there was a time when I did a Maths lesson for the rest of my colleagues in my class and I was prepared to accept their criticism because there are things that I could have done wrong.

Peer classroom observation according to Little (2000), cited in Muijs and Harris (2003: 439), is a dimension of the teacher leadership role. Peer observation is relatively new in South African schools. Educator X2 and Y2's comments show that some kind of teacher leadership initiative was taking place in two of the three schools in the study. While schools X and Y have tried team teaching there is no evidence of it being done in school Z. This is perhaps because it is a new concept for many teachers who still have to come to grips with the idea of sharing information with other teachers as well as having other educators sitting in on their lessons. In order for team teaching to be accepted as a norm in the South African context, time has to be set aside in the timetable for this. Timetables in schools are often very rigid with no leeway for change. This has a lot to do with the number of hours that a teacher has to teach in the week as well as the teacher not having much free time during the day in order to inter-change classes or the time to collaborate with one another in order to team teach.

There is evidence of team work taking place in all three schools. One principal explained in the following way:

Principal X: There are few or any activities that are taken single handed, we've got committees that range from excursions, it is left to the grade teachers, we have people who oversee that from management. Take pupil welfare, it takes team work....

It is therefore evident that teachers do not work single-handedly in accomplishing tasks.

4.3.5. Barriers to Teacher leadership

4.3.5.1. Structure

One of the barriers to teacher leadership, as we see in School Z, is one of structure where the management structures are not in place, thus making leadership difficult to implement.

4.3.5.2. Workload and time

Another barrier to teacher leadership that emerged in this study is workload and time. These dimensions impact on the personal lives of teachers. In response to the question, how has this impacted on your personal lives? The majority of educators spoke of the pressure on their personal life and home situation. For example, educator X2 spoke of the anxieties placed on him:

Educator X2: There were times when my wife has told me that I have no time for them, that my first love is school and even when I come home.....
I sit in front of the computer till late at night. And now that I have a little son, it does bug me, deciding in the future to take on less roles.

If taking on leadership roles impacts on the personal lives of teachers, then very few teachers would opt to take on these roles. Time has to be allocated within the school day for planning and for meetings to be held so that it does not impact on the personal lives of teachers. According to Zinn(1997) cited in Katzenmeyer & Moller (2003: 111), “teachers are no different from other adults in their attempts to balance work and family obligations. Teacher leaders may pull back from leadership tasks or even refuse to assume these roles if it takes time from personal responsibilities”.

Time is another barrier to teacher taking on leadership roles. The educators felt that taking on roles took up a lot of time both after schools and at weekends. This seems to have impacted on their family life. Educator Y1 had the following to say:

Educator Y1: Timewise, it has been totally demanding. Every year my husband has asked me when I am going to stop, because of the coming home late and typing of minutes and things. Despite the fact that I am so stressed at the moment because of time.

Katzenmeyer & Moller concur: “without common planning time or sufficient time within school days, they may meet on weekends or evenings on their own time to do the necessary preparation and coordination of efforts” (2003: 111).

Teachers are under enormous strain trying to juggle teaching time with the rest of the roles that they have to undertake, both in the classroom, as well as outside the classroom.

Principal Z: They have to teach for a certain number of hours and they are not doing justice because they have so little free time.

This view is reiterated by Principal Y who says:

I would say workload. I think primarily the workload, our educators at the moment it is multi-tasked. Look at what they have to see to, look at the seven or eight roles they have to play. And we are in a new curriculum order, they are just making themselves familiar with what is expected of them in the new curriculum. And then you are looking at all the other aspects of the educator's role, extra curricular involvement, the involvement in fund-raising, his involvement in preparing learners for various challenges, so I think it is workload.

4.3.5.3. Teachers as barriers to teacher leadership

The Principals in the study on the other hand, felt that the following were barriers to teacher leadership: apathy, health conditions of educators, workload, lack of confidence in themselves and being afraid of failure. Principal X felt that the health conditions of his staff may be one of the barriers to teachers taking on leadership roles.

Principal X: Apathy in the system, in some cases, of course which I think is valid, it is also the health conditions of the persons concerned. Even at this school we've got persons whose health conditions is not at the best, you see. So invariably they can't perform in these functions, but tactfully we have gone around, in examples, of support of persons who can't get out, so we minimize in terms of the institution.

As to the disadvantages of teacher leadership, Principal Y saw no disadvantages "at this moment". Principal X said that it would be "hard for me to say unless you have apathetic persons". Whereas Principal Z had the following to say:

When certain people feel that they are in leadership roles or convenors... they can willy-nilly do what they want to do without consultation and things like that. So in the role where people want to now think that it is them only and give out instructions, and the tone in which things are said. And the others who don't agree with them don't say a thing. They just keep quiet and they are already intimidated.

So it would seem from School Z that micro-politics in the school would be one of the barriers to educators taking on leadership roles in their school.

This is evident when Educator Z states that teachers are not always fully supportive when others take on leadership roles.

Educator Z: I found that staff members, some of them, were holding back, because they felt that they wanted to see me fall, for me not to get things done. it could be envy.

Educator Z found that it was not only members of staff who were not supportive, but that management can also not be very helpful when assistance is required.

Educator Z: I found that at that stage we did not have a computer room, and management started actually locking the doors, for me not to gain access, to the computer, which wasn't a good thing.

Educator Z was of the opinion that teachers held back from taking on leadership roles because "they also had that fear in them, that if they are going to do this, what are others going to say".

4.3.6. Advantages of teacher leadership

It would seem then, that taking on leadership roles is part and parcel of the job of the educator in South Africa. What then are some of the advantages for the school and the teacher in the long run?

Principal X: the advantages are certainly the biggest spin-off is to the client, the client is the child,.... Secondly, it is the splitting of energies. Thirdly, I think everybody has an innate ability to be a leader....

Principal Y:would give opportunities for succession planning.... The pool of ideas that is going to be available in terms of leadership.....in terms of managing the school they are going to make a major contribution to the institution as a dynamic organization. there is also room for those educators that are innovative and creative to come up and

try new ideas.

Principal Z: The school benefits from it, not only the school benefits but the learners. find that the image of the school, we have a better image. a lot of harmony. you get teamwork.

The principals readily acknowledge that having teacher leaders on the staff, will ultimately be beneficial to the child. They believe that it will contribute to creating a school environment in which everybody works together, there are opportunities for planning, for generating creative and innovative ideas, and for creating harmony in the school, and a positive image for the school.

The educators felt that having teacher leaders on the staff can only be beneficial to the school as well as building of character and making one more confident. Educator Y1 said:

It builds your character, it makes you more confident, you are able to handle the next couple of situations a lot better than I did initially, when I first started. It also makes you value yourself as an educator because you are not just here in the classroom. You are doing a lot of other things.

If these are just some of the advantages of teachers undertaking leadership roles why, I ask myself, is there not a more purposive and vigorous implementation of policy, and why is every effort not being made to encourage educators in these roles?

From the presentation and discussion of the results of the interviews and the responses gained from the questionnaire, it would seem that teachers are taking on a number of leadership roles in their schools. There were a number of barriers to teachers taking on leadership roles as well as some advantages. It is also evident that the culture of the school plays a large part in teachers taking on leadership roles.

We now move on to Chapter five which outlines the conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER 5

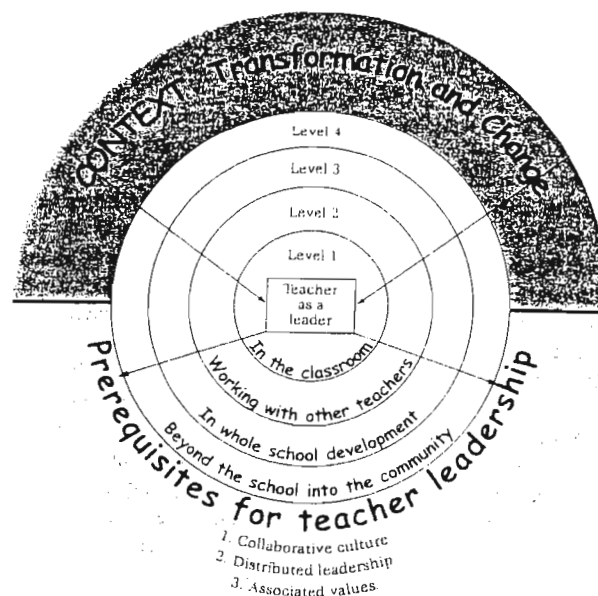
CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

Looking again at the definition of teacher leadership by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001: 5), that “teachers who are leaders lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders, and influence others towards improved education practice”, we can see that teachers in this study, certainly ‘lead within and beyond the classroom’ as they have undertaken numerous roles in their schools. The study done by Grant (2006) illustrates this finding. Grant developed a model that “incorporated leadership in and beyond the classroom including relationships with other teachers, involvement in whole school development initiatives as well as leadership beyond the school into the community” (2006: 528).

I replicate her model here to show the comparison between the findings in her study and the findings in this study.

Figure 1 Towards a model of understanding of teacher leadership in South Africa



Each level of Grant's model (2006: 519-521) is built on the previous one. Level One: indicates that "teachers, must be leaders within the classroom as they manage the teaching/learning process." She understands this view of teacher leadership in terms of the notion of restricted professionalism', which refers to teachers whose thinking and practice is narrowly classroom based.

Level Two of Grant's model involves teachers who must also lead beyond the classroom as they develop working relationships with other teachers. This level makes reference to teachers who "understand their work more broadly and continually research and evaluate their work to change and improve it"(2006: 520).

In Level Three, according to Grant's model, teachers should become more involved in whole school development issues such as vision building and policy development. Grant says that "there was reference to teacher leadership in relation to sport, projects, extra-curricular activities and school task teams such as those related to developing school policy, staff development, and the school development team"(2006: 520).

And finally, Level Four level four of this model stipulates that teachers should extend themselves beyond the school and lead in community life and cross-school networking. According to Grant, "examples of teacher leadership, which fit into this level, includes teachers sitting on the School Governing Body, acting as union site stewards, becoming chairpersons of the district learning area committees and working at the help desks of the various trade unions" (2006: 520-521).

The teachers in this study are generally working within the first three of Grant's four levels in the model (2006) Teachers in this study were leaders within their classrooms. They also, especially in schools X and Y, networked with other teachers, team taught and did peer observations. The teachers in this study also assumed many roles that contributed to vision building and whole school development. In other words, the majority operated as 'extended professionals' (Hoyle, 1980), because they

were able to evaluate their work and improve on it, by working in their learning area committees both inside and outside the school. Many of the teachers from school X and Y however, did not fit into level four, which states that “teachers should extend themselves beyond the school and lead in community and cross school networking. The teachers in School Z, only networked with another school when it came to working with the new curriculum in order to work on work schedules.

Teacher leadership roles in schools can be either formal or informal. In the schools researched, the teachers interviewed undertook a number of formal roles, representing the school on the governing body and to some extent sharing their expertise as teachers. Educator Y2 demonstrated a mathematics lesson for the other teachers in her phase. And as Principal X stated, when teachers had to take on leadership roles and convene events, time was needed for this. As a school they made time by getting other teachers to hold their classes for them, by serving relief in that class so that it was possible for the teacher to get time off to do these extra tasks.

I now raise the following pertinent question: “Why teacher leadership, and what place does it have in the South African context”? The three principals in the Pietermaritzburg region could readily enumerate the advantages of having teacher leadership on their staffs: It would be advantageous to their learners. It leads to the rejuvenation of teachers and increase levels of motivation and creates opportunities for succession planning. It also makes possible a greater pool of ideas and provides room for teachers to come up with innovative and creative ideas. It creates harmony and makes it possible for teamwork to take place. When teachers work together they tend to achieve more and this leads to harmony and a better working environment. In short, they believed that the presence of teacher leaders on their staff could only contribute positively to the maintenance and enhancement of a sound culture of teaching and learning.

The report by the Task Team on Education Management Development suggests that:

individuals who are working together in an environment which is constantly changing, require support. Managing people and developing their skills ensures continuous improvement and positive change for everyone in the organization and makes excellence in our schools possible (1996: 45).

5.2. What factors exist in schools that help or hinder teacher leadership?

This then brings us to the next key question. What factors exist in schools that help or hinder teacher leadership? One of the most important factors that emerged from this study is having the proper structures in place for teachers to take on leadership positions. Teachers must be afforded the opportunities to feel empowered to take on leadership roles. This is being done to different extents in all three schools. Principal X stated that they delegated role functions down to staff members. If roles are delegated, does this not imply that the school is organized hierarchically, despite the principal saying that they are organized democratically? This brings to the fore the debate of delegated verses distributed leadership. If principals delegate duties to teachers then this is evidence of top-down management styles. Teachers are not being given the opportunity to take on the roles that they prefer. Roles are given to them by management. For teacher leadership to occur, as discussed in the literature review, school roles need to emerge through a distributed form of leadership. This means that “leadership need not only rest with the principal but that anyone can assume a leadership role” (Muijs and Harris, 2003: 439). But is South Africa, a “fledgling democracy”, ready for this? Is our education system ready to have distributed leadership in their schools? If the answer is yes, then, the question that can then be asked is who distributes these roles? This has to be done collectively as a staff to ensure that it is done democratically. This view concurs with Muijs and Harris’s literature that “points towards ‘top-down’ management structures in schools as a major impediment to the development of teacher leadership” (2003: 442). Despite this, teachers are still taking on some leadership roles in their schools. What schools must aim for is a more horizontal flatter structure where teachers are invited to lead or

spontaneously lead in a more bottom up way. When teachers feel that they are part of the decision making processes at the school, they feel part of that school community and that they do make a difference.

Teachers who believe that they play meaningful roles in the decision making process, are more likely to take ownership of the school, and will more willingly embrace the goals and vision and work together with others to bring them to reality. Principal Z stated that “at the end of the day I am the accountable officer here”. Grant states that in the South African context, policy documents emphasis principal accountability, and this may well be one of the reasons why principals are afraid to delegate authority. Grant feels that for “teacher leadership to occur, not only do principals need to distribute authority, but teachers need to understand and take up their agency role” (2006: 527). Teachers need to see the benefits of taking on leadership roles. They can do this by becoming intrinsically motivated and seeing both the personal and professional benefits of taking on leadership roles. This is in agreement with Muijs and Harris who argue that “teacher leadership roles cannot easily be imposed by management” (2003: 442). Teachers need to want to take on these roles. This is not really happening in the schools in the study. Principals and teachers are aware of this but only in principle. The volunteering to take on leadership roles is not happening in practice. Teachers are undertaking leadership roles both formally and informally, but they are not volunteering for these roles. The roles are either delegated by management or teachers are nominated for the roles by other staff members who believe they are well-suited to undertake leadership positions on committees.

This study has emphasized the important point that teachers must be given time off to take on leadership roles. Time must be made for planning, meeting with staff members and for chairing meetings. All three schools, as with the majority of schools in South Africa, work according to a strict and rigid timetable with set hours stipulated by the Department of Education. At this stage in the evolution of our education system, no time is formally available for teachers to take on leadership roles. Principals will therefore have to be creative in making time for these teachers to

take on their roles. Principal X said they had to compromise, example, by utilizing relief teachers so that teachers have time to convene events. Muijs and Harris (2003: 4430) also state that “time needs to be set aside for teachers to meet to plan and discuss issues such as curriculum matters, developing school wide plans,...collaborating with colleagues. Grant concurs with this. She argues that “teachers, principals and schools need time to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for distributed leadership and teacher leadership to become a reality” (2006: 529).

Teachers in this study feel that undertaking leadership roles impacts heavily on their personal lives. Like all professionals, they too, have to balance work with personal / family time. At times leadership roles are too demanding in that teachers have to attend meetings after school hours, in the evenings and sometimes during weekends. As one educator stated, if his leadership roles had to impact on his personal life any further, he would have to give up some of his roles. To overcome this problem, time must be set aside in the school day for teachers to successfully take on leadership roles so that they have time for meetings and for planning.

What would be ideal is if teachers were to internalize the advantages of taking on leadership roles and embrace leadership roles as opportunities for growth, both for themselves and for the institution. If it is, as Grant (2006) argues, that the majority of teachers in South Africa are unaware of the concepts of teacher leadership and distributed leadership, then programmes need to be in place to workshop relevant policy documents and to ensure that these concepts and associated roles are understood and implemented in the schools.

Finally, the workload of the South African teacher must be taken into account. Teachers are already heaving and straining under the enormous workload that they currently have, without the additions of leadership roles. The research highlights the point that in order for there to be successful teacher leaders in the school, workloads must be lightened for those educators that choose to undertake leadership roles. This

can be done either by reducing the number of hours that teachers teach in a week or by setting time in the timetable for meetings, staff development, and planning. It is also important that there is an equal distribution of leadership roles. Teachers should be encouraged to take on a role where their strength lies because this will lead to their empowerment, and foster greater collegiality among members of staff.

The role of the principal in encouraging teachers to take on roles in their schools is critical. Principal X says that he always encourages teachers to take on roles. Principal Y said that he did not directly tell teachers but his educators were aware that there were opportunities. One of the roles of the principal is to motivate his staff and to build capacity if principals do this then they encourage staff members to take on leadership roles.

5.3. How does the culture of the school support or create barriers to teacher leadership?

Katzenmeyer and Moller say that the most important factor impacting on the development or obstruction of teacher leadership is the context of the school (2001:76). Grant's model of teacher leadership emphasizes the importance of context (2006: 520). The schools in the study all operate in the urban context in that they are fairly advantaged and effective schools. Against the backdrop of this context the question of school culture comes to the fore. This brings me then to my sub-question: 'how does the culture of the school support or create barriers to teacher leadership'? In answering this question, in terms of the schools that I have researched, it would seem that the culture that exists in School X is one of co-operation. In School Y there is teamwork and sharing of ideas and evidence of teachers taking ownership of the school. In School Z, there is the positive culture that promotes teaching and learning. The culture that exists in all three schools is to some extent supportive of teacher leadership. All the educators said that they received positive feedback from other educators to their undertaking these roles.

5.4. What personal factors enhance or inhibit teacher leadership?

Some of the personal factors that enhance or inhibit teacher leadership, that can be gleaned from the questionnaires and interviews were, time away from family, and time spent planning and organizing and implementing for the roles that they have undertaken.

From the research it emerged that there is a need for the Department of Education to acknowledge the benefits of teacher leadership and put in place programmes that will encourage the emergence of teacher leadership. It is also essential that the school day be structured in such a way that time is given to teachers for taking on these leadership roles. There also has to be something more than intrinsic rewards for teachers taking on roles to make it more lucrative in terms of the extra time spent on these roles.

5.5. Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have looked at what policy says about teachers taking on leadership roles in the South African context. I also looked at the history of management in the South African context and the role the principal plays in the management of the school. I found that there was a gap between what policy says teachers should be doing and what teachers are actually doing. Although policy says that teachers must be leaders, administrators and managers, teachers were either not aware of this policy requirement or they were not given the opportunity to do this as schools still operate largely with top-down management structures. In order to answer my research question, I carried out case studies in three primary schools in the Pietermaritzburg region. My research instruments were questionnaires and semi-structured interviews with five educators and three principals. I also reviewed literature on teacher leadership both in South Africa as well as on studies done in other countries. I found that teachers in my study were not aware of teacher leadership as a concept but were aware of leadership roles undertaken in schools even though they often did not view them as leadership roles at the time. I also found that there were a number of barriers to teachers taking on roles. These barriers were

related to school structure, roles being delegated, heavy workloads that impacted on personal lives of teachers as well time constraints and requirements of the school day.

The findings of my case study research, although not generalizeable, has contributed a little in closing the gap in teacher leadership literature in South Africa in that it provides some insight into what teachers and principals think of teacher leadership, what are some of the barriers and requirements for teacher leadership and the entire role of teacher leadership in mobilizing and inspiring teachers to work together towards a shared and owned vision. I feel the way forward is for government and other agencies, to popularize and market the concept of teacher leadership so that teachers, in line with policy, claim ownership of the school by taking on leadership roles.

5.6. Recommendations for further research.

A few questions have come up during this study that need further research. Some of these are: What kind of roles are teachers undertaking and why are they undertaking these roles? What are the perceptions of South African teachers of teacher leadership? If their perceptions of teacher leadership are negative, what factors have contributed to this negative perception? Is it generally more male or more female teachers who are undertaking leadership roles at schools? If there are gender imbalances, what are the possible reasons for this? To what extent do teacher perceptions of their roles and identities as teachers influence their taking on leadership roles?

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Appendix i

48 Bodmin Road
Allandale
Pietermaritzburg
3201

27 September 2005

Mr Sibusiso Alwar
Department of Education and Culture
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Research on Teacher Leadership

I am a level 1 educator at Deccan Road Primary School and I am currently enrolled for a Masters Degree in Education at the University of KwaZulu Natal. My area of specialization is Leadership and Education Management. The title of my dissertation is "An investigation into factors that help or hinder teacher leadership: Case studies of three urban primary schools in the Pietermaritzburg Region."

Sir, you are undoubtedly aware, that the post level one educator is required to take on leadership roles in respect of the subject/learning area, and co and extra-curricular activities, contribute to professional development of colleagues and foster administrative efficiency within the school. The purpose of my study is to examine the extent to which the structure and culture of the school supports or creates barriers to teachers taking on these roles. Underpinning my research is the belief that increased participation by level 1 educators will enhance the capacity of the school to build and maintain a dynamic culture of teaching and learning.

It would be deeply appreciated if you could sanction/authorize my proposed research in three schools listed below. Needless to say, the identities of schools and educators who complete the survey as well as those interviewed will be treated as strictly confidential and will not be divulged under any circumstances. Please also be assured that, the highest standard of professional and ethical behaviour will be adhered to at all times.

The schools that I intend doing my research in are:

Data collection will involve survey questionnaires, interviews with selected educators and interviews with principals.

Please find enclosed a letter from the University confirming my enrollment in the Masters programme and the research study that I have embarked upon. I shall be deeply grateful for your support and endorsement and I look forward to hearing from you at the earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully

S.M. Rajagopaul

Appendix ii



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

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INHLOKHOHOVISI

PIETERMARITZBURG

HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries:
Imibuzo: Sibusiso Alwar
Navrae:

Reference:
Inkomba: 0068/05
Verwysing:

Date:
Usuku: 24 October 2005
Datum:

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that **Ms Shevi Rajagopaul** has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

- That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.
- Attached is the list of schools she/he has been granted permission to conduct research in. however, it must be noted that the schools are not obligated to participate in the research if it is not a KZNDoe project.
- **Ms Shevi Rajagopaul** has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.
- No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.


SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education



Appendix iii



University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

23 March 2005

Permission to conduct research

To whom it may concern

Ms Shevi Rajagopaul (student number 202001426) is engaged in research for her Masters degree in Education Leadership and Management. In order for her to conduct her research, she will need access into your school and assistance from you and your staff in collecting her research data. I would appreciate it if you would provide her with assistance in her research endeavour.

Thank you very much for your cooperation. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely



Ms Callie Grant
Supervisor
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Medical School

Pietermaritzburg

Westville

Appendix iv

**Teacher Leadership
Questionnaire**

Dear Educator

This questionnaire forms part of my research for my Masters of Education Degree, investigating teacher leadership. The 17 questions take approximately 30 minutes to complete this questionnaire is anonymous and at no stage would your identity be revealed. I would appreciate your support and participation and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire.

Thank you

S.M.Rajagopaul

Gender (circle where appropriate)

Male

Female

Age (circle where appropriate)

21 – 25

26 – 30

31 – 35

36 – 40

41 – 45

46 – 50

51 – 55

56 – 60

61 – 65

Years of teaching experience (Please specify)

1. How are decisions made in your school?

1.1 Does your principal encourage teachers to take the initiative and explore and implement new ideas?

Yes/ No

1.1.1. If yes, substantiate.

1.2 How would you describe the management style in your school? Tick the appropriate block.

Autocratic	
Democratic	
Laizze Faire	

1.3 Does the atmosphere in your school encourage/ discourage/ neither encourage or discourage teachers taking on leadership roles? Explain.

2. What leadership roles (formal informal) do you hold in your school?

2.1. How do your colleagues feel about you taking on these roles?

2.2. Has taking on a leadership role impacted on your personal time?

Yes/ No

If yes, how has it affected your personal time?

2.3. Has taking on a leadership role impacted on your teaching time?

Yes/ No

If yes, please explain.

2.4. Does the management structures in your school make it possible for you to take on leadership positions?

Yes / No

3. Do you design your own learning programmes?

Yes / No

3.1. Do you work as part of a team in designing learning area programmes?

Yes / No

If yes, how has this helped you in making your work easier?

Please note that the following questions are related to IQMS, performance standard 7.

3. Are you in charge of any extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in your school?

Yes / No

If yes, please specify the activities.

4. List the workshops that you attended in the last two years.

- 4.1. How have these workshops contributed to your empowerment?

- 4.2. Did you attempt to empower other teachers in your school after these workshops?
Briefly describe their responses.

- 4.3. How did this make you feel?

Thank you for taking the time and making the effort to answer this questionnaire. Your input and efforts are greatly appreciated .

Appendix v

Semi-structured interview with educators

Positive responses

1. What leadership roles have you undertaken?
2. What made you take on these roles?
3. How did management react to your taking on these roles?
4. What was the reaction of staff members/educators to your taking on these roles?
5. How has this impacted on your personal life?
6. What leadership qualities do you possess?
7. As an educator what leadership qualities do you think a person should have?

Negative responses

1. Have you tried taking on leadership roles?
2. What was the reaction of the staff?
3. How has this impacted on your personal life?
4. Do you see yourself taking on leadership roles in the future?
5. What were some of the barriers to you taking on leadership roles?

Appendix vi

Semi-structured interview with principals

1. How is your school organised in terms of leadership and management?
2. What kind of culture exists in your school?
3. How are leadership and management decisions taken?
4. How do you feel about educators taking on leadership roles?
5. Have you ever made it known that they could undertake leadership roles?
6. Are there any educators in your school in leadership roles?
7. How have you encouraged them in their roles?
8. What kind of educators become leaders?
9. What would prevent your educators taking on leadership roles?
10. What would you see as the advantages or disadvantages to teachers taking on leadership roles or having teacher leaders in your school?

Appendix vii Consent

Title of Research: Teacher Leadership

An investigation into factors that help or hinder teacher leadership.

Name of researcher: S.M.Rajagopaul

Contact: 084 517 2502

Name of Supervisor: Callie Grant

Contact: 033 2606185

I am currently enrolled for the Master of Education Degree at the University of KwaZulu Natal and I am doing research on Teacher Leadership. My study involves three schools in the Pietermaritzburg region and your school is one of them.

On agreeing to be part of the research, you, and other volunteers in your school, will be required to fill in questionnaires which will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The questionnaires will be collected and after careful study of the information provided, 2 or 3 candidates per school will be selected to take part in the interview.

Interviews will be conducted after school at a time convenient to you. All interviews will be audio-taped and then transcribed.

At no time will your name or the name of the school be revealed. Candidates and schools will be assigned codes known only to me.

As agreeing to take part in this research is voluntary, you are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and for any reason, with no consequences to you.

Thank you for agreeing to be part of my study

S.M.Rajagopaul

DECLARATION TEACHER LEADERSHIP

I(full name of participant)
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

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